



Aruba TODAY

On Top Of The News Email:news@arubatoday.com website: www.arubatoday.com Tel:+297 582-7800 Thursday, February 13, 2014



US Senate Clears Debt Limit Measure For Obama

Sen. Ted Cruz, R-Texas arrives on Capitol Hill in Washington, Wednesday, Feb. 12, 2014, as senators successfully vote to extend the Treasury's borrowing authority. (AP Photo/J. Scott Applewhite)

ANDREW TAYLOR
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Must-pass legislation to allow the U.S. government to borrow money to pay its bills

cleared Congress Wednesday for President Barack Obama's signature after a dramatic Senate tally in which top Republican leaders cast crucial votes.

The Senate approved the measure by a near party-line 55-43 vote. All of the "aye" votes came from Obama's Democratic allies.

The measure is required so that the government can borrow to pay bills like pension benefits, federal salaries, and payments to health care programs for

the elderly and the poor. Congress has never failed to act to prevent a default on U.S. obligations.

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MASSIVE STORM MAKES ITS WAY ACROSS SOUTH

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YANKEES' STAR DEREK JETER TO RETIRE IN 2014

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French leader lands in California for tech talks



French president Francois Hollande arrives during a visit to city hall on Wednesday, Feb. 12, 2014, in San Francisco. The French president visited San Francisco to meet politicians, lunch with Silicon Valley tech executives and inaugurate a new U.S.-French Tech Hub.

(AP Photo/Marcio Jose Sanchez)

GARANANCE BURKE
Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — France's president arrived Wednesday in the heart of tech country for meetings with Silicon Valley and government leaders, just days after a French regula-

tor hit Google with an embarrassing regulatory slap and after years of efforts to wrest more taxes from tech firms. President Francois Hollande was greeted at San Francisco City Hall by Mayor Ed Lee, California Lt. Gov. Gavin Newsom

and former U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz, as school children waved French and American flags on the stairway of the rotunda.

Later in the day, Hollande and members of his cabinet were set to meet with

Google executive chairman Eric Schmidt; Sheryl Sandberg, chief operating officer of Facebook; and Twitter chairman and co-founder Jack Dorsey. The French leader was visiting the region during his three-day state visit to the U.S.

Hollande points to the U.S. tech industry as an economic success that he hopes to replicate at home. But he's also been among the leaders of Europe's fight to prevent what the continent sees as a systematic attempt by tech firms to invade privacy and avoid paying their corporate fair share.

More than 300 French companies have offices in California, and a large portion of U.S. investments in France are from California, Hollande told the crowd at a City Hall reception in his honor. "It is here in California that the world of tomorrow is being invented," Hollande said. "For centuries France has wanted to change the world. Together we can."

Hollande also was expected to meet with French entrepreneurs and inaugurate an office in the gritty Dogpatch neighborhood aimed at supporting their efforts.

Marie Buhot-Launay, who heads marketing for the office, said staff members were giddy that Hollande was throwing his support behind the venture, given the intense competition they face from entrepreneurs from Germany, Finland and Ireland.

"For French entrepreneurs, the American dream still exists and especially in Silicon Valley," she said. "This new support will really help them accelerate their growth, and help us scale up the services we provide and build a larger network of mentors and investors in France and in the U.S."

Google, Facebook and Twitter have faced scrutiny by European regulators over privacy, hate speech and data protection issues. Over the weekend, Google posted a statement on its French website noting that France's digital privacy watchdog found the search giant in violation of rules on ensuring data privacy. □

White House offers help to industry over cyberattacks

NEDRA PICKLER
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The White House on Wednesday offered to help U.S. businesses protect their computer systems from cyberattacks that President Barack Obama called "one of the gravest national security dangers that the United States faces."

Administration officials warned during an event at the White House that an attack on critical sectors of the U.S. economy could put the entire country at risk. "It boils down to this — in cybersecurity, the more systems we secure, the more secure we all are," said Homeland Security Secretary Jeh Johnson. "We are all connected online and a vulnerability in one place can cause a problem in many other places." The administration released a 39-page guide

urging vital industries like transportation, financial, health care and energy to assess their risk and take action to close gaps. The Homeland Security Department also launched a voluntary program for businesses to get help at no cost from its cybersecurity experts about ways to counter threats.

The cyberthreat to the U.S. has been heavily debated since the 1990s, when much of American commerce shifted online and critical systems began to rely increasingly on networked computers. Security experts began to warn of looming disaster, including threats that terrorists could cut off a city's water supply or shut down electricity. But what's emerged in recent years, according to cyber experts, is the constant pilfering of America's intellectual property. □

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US Senate clears debt limit measure for Obama

Continued from Front

Quick action on the debt limit bill stands in contrast to lengthy showdowns in 2012 and last fall when Republicans sought to use the critically necessary measure as leverage to win concessions from Obama. They succeeded in 2011, winning about \$2 trillion in spending cuts, but Obama has been unwilling to negotiate over the debt limit since his re-election, and Wednesday's legislation is the third consecutive debt measure passed without White House concessions. With their eye on November elections Republicans have been less confrontational after October's 16-day partial government shutdown sent Republican poll numbers skidding and chastened the party's conservative tea party faction. Republicans have instead sought to focus voters' attention on the implementation and effects of Obama's health care law, which they have targeted as a weakness for the Democrats in an election year.

The vote to pass the measure was anticlimactic after a dramatic 67-31 tally — held open for more than an hour — in which the measure cleared a procedural hurdle insisted on by tea party Republican Ted Cruz, a potential 2016 presidential candidate. The Senate's top two Republicans — both facing tea party challenges in their party primaries this year — provided crucial momentum after a knot of Republicans in the Senate well were clearly unhappy at having to walk the plank. After Minority Leader Mitch McConnell and his top vote pusher John Cornyn, both Republicans, voted "aye" several other Republicans switched their votes in solidarity. Twelve Republicans ultimately voted to help the measure advance but the tally appeared to be in doubt for several anxious minutes.

Cruz' demands irritated

Republicans because it forced several of them, particularly McConnell, to cast a difficult vote. McConnell faces tea party candidate Matt Bevin.

"In my view, every Republican should stand together against raising the debt ceiling without meaningful structural reforms to rein in our out of control spending," Cruz said.

The legislation would permit Treasury to borrow normally for another 13 months and then reset the government's borrowing cap, currently set at \$17.2 trillion, after that.

It passed the House Tuesday after Republicans gave up efforts to use the debt ceiling measure to win concessions from Obama on Republican agenda items like winning approval of construction of the Keystone XL pipeline from Canada.

Passage of the debt limit measure without any extraneous issues comes after House Republican leaders tried for weeks to find a formula to pass a version of their own that included Republican agenda items like repeal of an element of the health care law. But a sizable faction of House Republicans simply refuse to vote for any increase in the government's borrowing abilities, which forced House Republican Speaker John Boehner to turn to Democratic Minority Leader to pass the measure on the strength of Democrats. The debt measure permits Treasury to borrow regularly through March 15, 2015, putting the issue off until after the November elections and setting it up for the new Congress to handle next year. If Republicans take over the Senate, they're likely to insist on linking the debt ceiling to spending cuts and other Republican agenda items, but for now at least, the issue is being handled the old fashioned way, with the party of the incumbent president being responsible for supplying the votes to pass it but with the minority party not standing in the way. □



Sen. Bob Corker, R-Tenn., speaks to reporters outside the Senate chamber on Capitol Hill in Washington, Wednesday, Feb. 12, 2014, during maneuvering on the vote to extend the Treasury's borrowing authority. The debt limit measure was passed by the House Tuesday.

(AP Photo/J. Scott Applewhite)



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Another ice storm causes havoc across US South



A police officer prepares to close a road as a winter storm moves into the area Wednesday, Feb. 12, 2014, in Charlotte, N.C. (AP Photo/Chuck Burton)

**CHRISTINA A. CASSIDY
KATE BRUMBACK
Associated Press**

ATLANTA (AP) — The second wintry storm in two weeks to hit the normally balmy U.S. South encrusted highways, trees and power lines in ice Wednesday, knocking out electricity to more than 350,000 homes and businesses. At least nine traffic deaths across the region were blamed on the treacherous weather, including three people who were killed when an ambulance careened off an icy West

Texas road and caught fire. More than 3,100 airline flights nationwide were canceled. Forecasters warned of a potentially "catastrophic" storm across the South with more than an inch (2.5 centimeters) of ice possible in places. As the day wore on, power outages climbed by the hour and the dreary weather came in waves. But it didn't wreak the highway havoc in Atlanta that the previous bout of heavy weather did — largely because people learned their

lesson the last time and stayed off the roads. As residents across the South heeded forecasters' unusually dire warnings and hunkered down at home against the onslaught of snow and freezing rain, the storm pushed northward, threatening to bring more than a foot (30 centimeters) of snow Thursday to the already sick-of-winter mid-Atlantic and Northeast. Ice combined with wind gusts up to 30 mph (48 kph) snapped tree limbs and power lines. More

than 200,000 homes and businesses lost electricity in Georgia, 130,000 in South Carolina and nearly 30,000 in Louisiana. Some people could be in the dark for days. In Atlanta, which was caught unprepared by the last storm, streets and highways were largely deserted this time. Before the first drop of sleet even fell, area schools announced they would be closed on Tuesday and Wednesday. Many businesses in the corporate capital of the South shut down, too.

The scene was markedly different from the one Jan. 28, when thousands of children were stranded all night in schools by less than 3 inches (less than 8 centimeters) of snow and countless drivers abandoned their cars after getting stuck in bumper-to-bumper traffic for hours and hours. North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory urged people to charge their cellphones and find batteries for radios and flashlights because the storm could bring nearly a foot of snow in places such as Charlotte. "Stay smart. Don't put your stupid hat on at this point in time. Protect yourself. Protect your family. Protect your neighbors," McCrory said. For the mid-Atlantic and the Northeast, the heavy weather was the latest in an unending drumbeat of storms that have depleted cities' salt supplies and caused school systems to run out of snow days. Washington D.C. could get up to 8 inches (20 centimeters) of snow. New York City could see 6 inches (15 centimeters). In Atlanta, stinging drops of sleet fell and windshields were crusted over with ice. Slushy sidewalks made even short walks treacherous. One emergency crew had to pull over to wait out the falling snow before slowly making its way back to the Georgia Emergency Management Agency's operations center. □



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Sen. Rand Paul sues Obama over NSA surveillance

EILEEN SULLIVAN
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Sen. Rand Paul, a possible Republican presidential candidate, sued the Obama administration Wednesday over the National Security Agency's mass collection of millions of Americans' phone records. The senator said he and the

the program in an effort to regain public trust. Others, like Paul, have called for the end of this kind of surveillance. Paul dodged a question about his presidential ambitions during a news conference Wednesday. But his lawsuit is the latest effort to propel the debate over the once-secret surveillance program

into the 2016 presidential campaign. The surveillance debate has exposed intra-party tensions for Republicans. The party split on this issue between its leadership, which backs the program on security grounds, and libertarian-minded members who are more wary of government involvement in Americans'

private lives.

The Republican National Committee last month approved a resolution to end the surveillance programs. While some Republicans played down its significance, the nonbinding vote was seen as a nod to Republicans like Paul.

The White House and Justice Department did not comment on the lawsuit specifically, but said they believe the bulk collection of phone records is legal.

"This, we believe, will be a historic lawsuit," Paul said after filing the complaint in U.S. District Court in the District of Columbia. "We believe that this lawsuit could conceivably represent hundreds of millions of people who have phone lines in this country or cell-phones."

Ken Cuccinelli, the former attorney general of Virginia, is the lead counsel for Paul and FreedomWorks on the suit. Paul appeared at campaign rallies last October to support Cuccinelli's unsuccessful bid for Virginia governor. In December, Paul's advis-

ers approached Cuccinelli about participating in the lawsuit. "This is a constitutional challenge primarily," Cuccinelli told The Associated Press. "We're not debating national security policy." Cuccinelli has sued the Obama administration before — he was the first state attorney general to mount a legal challenge to the constitutionality of the president's signature health care overhaul.

The bulk collection program, which is authorized in Section 215 of the USA Patriot Act, sweeps up what's known as meta-data for every phone call made in the U.S. It collects the number called, the number from which the call is made and the duration and time of the call. The intelligence community says having this data is key to preventing terrorism. While there is little evidence the program has been integral in preventing an attack, the Obama administration argues that being able to rule out a U.S. connection is important because it provides "peace of mind." □



Sen. Rand Paul, R-Ky., center, accompanied by lead counsel, former Virginia Attorney General Ken Cuccinelli, right, and FreedomWorks Director Matt Kibbe, speaks to reporters in front of federal court in Washington, Wednesday, Feb. 12, 2014. Claiming the Obama administration is violating Americans' constitutional rights, Sen. Rand Paul and a conservative political group are filing a lawsuit over the National Security Agency's surveillance program.

(AP Photo/Charles Dharapak)

conservative activist group FreedomWorks filed the suit for themselves and on behalf of "everyone in America that has a phone."

The lawsuit argues that the bulk collection program that's been in existence since 2006 violates the U.S. Constitution's Fourth Amendment right against unreasonable searches. It calls for an end to the program, which was revealed by former National Security Agency analyst Edward Snowden. The Obama administration maintains that the program, begun under President George W. Bush, is legal. Courts have largely sided with the government. President Barack Obama has called for reforms to

Ex-New Orleans mayor convicted of taking bribes

KEVIN MCGILL
Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — Former New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin, best remembered for his impassioned pleas for help after Hurricane Katrina devastated the city in 2005, was convicted Wednesday of accepting bribes in exchange for helping businessmen secure millions of dollars in city work.

A federal jury found Nagin guilty of 20 of 21 counts against him. Before the verdict, the 57-year-old said outside the courtroom: "I've been at peace with this for a long time. I'm

good." As he left after the verdict, he could be heard saying, "I maintain my innocence." Katrina elevated Nagin to the global stage, where he gained a reputation for colorful comments. In 2006, he apologized for a speech in which he predicted New Orleans would become a "chocolate city" of black residents and asserted that "God was mad at America."

The Democrat, who left office in 2010, was indicted in January 2013 on charges he accepted hundreds of thousands of dollars in bribes and truckloads of free granite for his fam-

ily business in exchange for promoting the interests of local businessman Frank Fradella. He also was charged with accepting thousands of dollars in payoffs from another businessman, Rodney Williams, for his help in securing city contracts. Both Fradella and Williams are awaiting sentencing for their roles in separate bribery schemes alleged in the case.

Nagin testified that key witnesses lied and prosecutors misinterpreted evidence including emails, checks and pages from his appointment calendar linking him to businessmen

who said they bribed him. The charges against Nagin included one overarching conspiracy count along with six counts of bribery, nine counts of wire fraud, one count of money laundering conspiracy and four counts of filing false tax returns. He was acquitted of one of the bribery counts. Each charge carries a sentence from 3 to 20 years, but how long he would serve was unclear. No sentencing date was set. Prosecutors allege the corruption spanned the time before and after Hurricane Katrina struck, plunging the city into chaos. □

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Ex-soldier convicted in Iraqi death granted parole

KEN MILLER

Associated Press

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP) — A former U.S. Army lieutenant convicted of killing an Iraqi prisoner has been granted parole, the Army said Wednesday.

Former 1st Lt. Michael Behenna was granted parole after serving five years of a 15-year sentence for his 2009 conviction on a charge of unpremeditated murder in a combat zone. The Army Clemency and Parole Board denied Behenna's request for clemency, but granted him parole, according to Col. David Patterson. He said the decision was based on factors "including a strong parole plan with family and community support."

Behenna's parents, Scott and Vicki Behenna of Edmond, did not immediately return phone calls seeking comment, but previously have said their son would work on an Oklahoma cattle ranch and take classes at Oklahoma State

University. There was no dispute that Behenna was supposed to take the Iraqi prisoner home, but instead took him to a secluded railroad culvert, stripped him naked and shot him twice after interrogating him at

Behenna's command. Behenna said he acted in self-defense when the man reached for Behenna's handgun. The Army argued he could not claim self-defense because he was conducting an unau-

fought to overturn the conviction, but the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces and the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the decision.

Behenna drew support from Oklahoma Gov. Mary Fallin and the state's congressional delegation following his conviction.

"I am glad this long ordeal has finally come to an end for Michael Behenna and his family. Michael went to Iraq to serve his nation and to defend liberty both here and abroad. Instead, he found himself mourning the loss of his friends from the inside of a cell," Fallin said in a statement Wednesday. "I believe the Army acted appropriately and compassionately in offering him parole."

Sen. Jim Inhofe and Reps. James Lankford, Tom Cole, Frank Lucas, Markwayne Mullen and Jim Bridenstine, all Republicans, also issued a joint statement praising the decision to parole Behenna. □



In this 2008 photo, 1st Lt. Michael C. Behenna, center, walks out the courtroom in Camp Speicher, north of Baghdad, Iraq. Behenna of Edmond, Okla., who was convicted of killing an Iraqi prisoner has been granted parole after serving five years of a 15-year sentence, the Army said Wednesday, Feb. 12, 2014.

(AP Photo/Vanessa Gera)

gunpoint about an April 2008 roadside bombing that killed two men under

thorized interrogation at gunpoint.

Behenna's family had

US Boy Scouts' ranks drop after gays accepted

NOMAAN MERCHANT

Associated Press

DALLAS (AP) — The Boy Scouts of America said Wednesday that it lost 6 percent of its membership after a year in which it announced it would accept openly gay boys for the first time.

The organization's national leadership voted in May to make that change, while continuing to exclude gay leaders. That angered conservatives and some members who consider homosexuality a sin and a violation of Scouting values.

BSA spokesman Deron Smith said Wednesday that the 2013 decline could partially be attributed to that change. "There are many factors that go into a family's decision to join Scouting, and it's impossible to point to any single factor that influences our membership numbers," Smith said in an email. "This includes, but is not limited to, the limited amount of discretionary time and parents wanting relevant programs for their kids."

With nearly 2.5 million youth and almost 1 million adults, Scouting remains a significant force in communities across the United States, even though its membership has slowly but steadily declined over the last decade. BSA made the change to accept openly gay youth as it faced mounting public pressure in a nation that is growing more accepting of gays and gay marriage.

Zach Wahls, an Eagle Scout who founded the advocacy group Scouts for Equality, said he's heard of no incidents of potential discrimination since the policy went into effect. □

Health law sign-ups growing; goal still elusive

RICARDO ZALDIVAR

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Wide disparities are emerging among U.S. states in health insurance sign-ups, according to an Associated Press analysis of federal enrollment statistics released Wednesday.

The Obama administration says about 1 million people signed up for private insurance under the health law in January, extending a turnaround from early days when a dysfunctional website frustrated consumers. The new national numbers show that nearly 3.3 million people signed up from last Oct. 1 through Feb. 1.

The health care law is President Barack Obama's signature domestic achievement and officials in his administration are determined to make it work after a disastrous rollout in October. Opposition Republicans say the measure has many flaws and plan to criticize Democrats for them in election campaigns leading to congressional voting in November.

Although Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius says she's encouraged that the sign-up campaign is gaining ground, the government's initial target of 7 million by the end of March still seems

like a stretch.

Also, officials are unable to say how many of those who signed up were previously uninsured — the ultimate test of Obama's hard-fought overhaul.

Beyond the stronger national numbers, the latest report shows huge differences and surprising twists at the state level.

Some Republican-led states whose elected officials strongly oppose the law are keeping pace with monthly sign-up targets that the Health and Human Service Department established in September.

Some states where support for the law is strong are

among the worst performers.

The AP's analysis compared the latest cumulative sign-up numbers for each state with targets spelled out in a Sept. 5 memo to Sebelius that the AP obtained months ago.

A dozen states have met or surpassed sign-up targets, including New York, Connecticut, Colorado, Florida, North Carolina and Wisconsin. The first three have Democratic governors. The latter three are led by Republicans, and the federal government has had to take on the role of running the new insurance markets there. □

US Financial Front:

Volkswagen begins 3-day union vote in Tennessee

ERIK SCHELZIG
Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Tennessee (AP)

— Workers at Volkswagen's lone U.S. plant in Tennessee on Wednesday kicked off a three-day election that will determine whether they will be represented by the United Auto Workers union. If the union succeeds, the Chattanooga plant would become the first among foreign automakers in the American South to unionize.

A loss for the UAW would deal a severe setback for the union that has staked its future on organizing workers at plants outside of Detroit's Big Three.

The Chattanooga plant is alone among Volkswagen's major factories around the world without formal worker representation. The vote presents the UAW's best chance among the foreign transplants, because the corporate structure of the German automaker favors the creation of "works councils," where both blue-collar and salaried employees have a say in working conditions at the plant.

The company has said that under U.S. law it can't create the domestic auto industry's first works council without the establishment of a union at the plant.

In the interest of gaining a foothold at Volkswagen, the UAW signed an agreement with the company that it would "delegate functions and responsibilities ordinarily belonging to a union to a plant works council" if it wins this week's vote.

The prospect of unionization is dreaded by Republican politicians in the state, who say they worry about

losing a competitive edge in drawing future manufacturing jobs to Tennessee.

Republican U.S. Sen. Bob Corker, a former Chattanooga mayor who played a key role in bringing Volkswagen to Tennessee, has been among the most vocal critics of the union drive. Corker on Tuesday called the vote a "quickie election" because it wasn't announced until last week and said the UAW had stacked the balloting in its favor by heavily lobbying labor interests at the company's headquarters in Wolfsburg, Germany, over the preferences of local managers.

The senator declined to speculate on litigation that might be filed in the event of a UAW victory, though he did suggest that it's unclear whether the company can establish a works council even with the participation of a union.

Republicans in the state Legislature earlier this week warned Volkswagen workers that a vote in favor of the UAW could threaten the passage of state incentives seen as key to bringing new production to the plant.

Volkswagen announced in early January that it is mulling over whether to build a new SUV in Chattanooga or in Mexico. Labor leaders on Volkswagen's board have insisted that cost concerns — not unionization questions — will determine where that vehicle is built.



Workers walk by the Volkswagen AG plant in Chattanooga, Tenn. Workers at the plant will decide in a three-day vote that began Wednesday, Feb. 12, 2014, whether they want to be represented by the United Auto Workers union.

(AP Photo/Erik Schelzig)

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Obama toasts solo French president at state dinner



First Lady Michelle Obama and President Barack Obama with French President Francois Hollande, center, pose at the Grand Staircase as they arrive for a State Dinner at the White House in Washington, Tuesday, Feb. 11, 2014.

(AP Photo/Pablo Martinez Monsivais)

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Barack Obama and first lady Michelle Obama found just the right seat for French President Francois Hollande, who came to an elegant White House state dinner without an escort. They seated him between them, and tried to put an end to all the drama about his solo visit to the U.S.

Hollande's very public breakup from his first lady happened just weeks before Obama raised a glass to him at Tuesday's glitzy event. That left the White House to do its straight-faced best to keep the attention on anything but "l'affaire Hollande" and the French president's personal life.

In the kind of awkward turn of events that give protocol officers ulcers, the White House last autumn invited Hollande and his longtime girlfriend, Valerie Trierweiler, to come for a state visit, the first such honor for France in two decades. But just weeks ago, the two abruptly split after a magazine reported that a helmeted Hollande zipped via motorcycle to a liaison with French actress

Julie Gayet.

So on a frigid night in Washington, the evening's pomp and pageantry were designed to wrap Hollande in a comfy blanket of warmth, from the moment he stepped out

of his limo and onto a red carpet on the Pennsylvania Avenue entrance to the White House. The Obamas greeted him on the front steps, the first lady clad in a black and liberty blue silk gown by Carolina Herrera.

A four-course meal was served in a heated pavilion on the South Lawn that had patches of greenery and vines hanging from the ceiling like chandeliers. Democratic donors, politicians and business types



President Barack Obama offers a toast to French President Francois Hollande at the State Dinner, Tuesday, Feb. 11, 2014, on the South Lawn of the White House in Washington.

(AP Photo/Pablo Martinez Monsivais)

who made up the 350-person guest list Tuesday evening avoided mentioning the French intrigue.

Ben Jealous, former president of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, was nothing but admiring of the whole affair.

"I think the French are way cooler than we are on a whole lot of fronts," he said, including "way better gossip." The evening's celebrity quotient was impressive, including actors Bradley Cooper, Julia Louis-Dreyfus and Mindy Kaling. Many wondered how late-night political comedian Stephen Colbert snagged a seat on the other side of the first lady.

Mary J. Blige, the evening's sole entertainer, had to think for a second when asked whether she had a French connection. "Um, my last name is French," she said. Obama, in his dinner toast, was deliberately sparing with his French.

He welcomed the guests with a hearty "bonsoir," then confessed that "I have now officially exhausted my French."

Hollande delivered a good portion of his reciprocal toast in respectable English before switching to French. "We love Americans, although we don't always say so," he told the crowd. Amidst all the pleasantries and tactful chitchat, there was the occasional moment of candor.

Cosmopolitan editor Joanna Coles, asked about her Kaufman Franco black dress with a leather bodice, told reporters, "I was hoping it wasn't too slutty." Samantha Power, the U.S. ambassador to the U.N., drew a blank when reporters asked who designed her vibrant green dress. She called on her husband, Cass Sunstein, to check the label and dutifully reported it was Badgley Mischka.

Across the room from Hollande and Obama, vice presidents sat shoulder-to-shoulder: That would be Vice President Joe Biden and Louis-Dreyfus, who plays a vice president on the HBO comedy series "Veep." □



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Syrian planes pound opposition sites as talks falter

BARBARA SURK
ZEINA KARAM
Associated Press

BEIRUT/GENEVA (AP) — Syrian warplanes pounded a rebel-held town near the Lebanese border on Wednesday, activists said, as opposition leaders in Geneva called on Russia to put pressure on the government to prevent the faltering peace negotiations from collapsing.

A second round of talks that started in Geneva Monday is mired in acrimony as government and opposition delegates hurl accusations back and forth, unable to agree on a common agenda.

During a meeting with U.N. mediator Lakhdar Brahimi Wednesday, the opposition delegation submitted a paper containing their vision for a political transition. The proposal calls for the expulsion of all foreign fighters from Syria and a U.N. monitored cease-fire in Syria — but the Syrian deputy foreign minister dismissed it as a “show” and refused to discuss it.

The U.N. said that a meeting between senior U.S. and Russian officials — who are backing the process — with Brahimi will be held in Geneva Thursday, a day before it was originally planned.

The talks have been accompanied by a sharp rise in violence on the ground in Syria. The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Hu-

man Rights said at least 4,959 people have died in Syria in the three-week period since Jan. 22, when the first round of talks began in Switzerland.

The group, which documents the fighting on the ground through a wide network of activists, says the period has seen the highest death toll since the uprising against President Bashar Assad started in March 2011. In a statement, it called for suspending the talks in Geneva if they don't produce an immediate cessation of all military operations.

Troops on Wednesday pounded Yabroud — the last rebel stronghold in Syria's mountainous Qalamoun region. Backed by Lebanon's Hezbollah fighters, the Syrian army has been on a crushing offensive there since early December.

Activists reported heavy fighting in the area between troops loyal to Assad and rebels trying to overthrow him. The Observatory said warplanes have car-

ried out 10 airstrikes so far on Wednesday.

In Lebanon, preparations were underway to receive more Syrians fleeing the area. An Associated Press

reporter in the border area of Wadi Hmaied saw several trucks and buses packed with people, clothes and other belongings rolling into Lebanon. □



Louay Safi, right, spokesperson for the Syrian National Coalition, Syria's main political opposition group, leaves a press briefing with Anas al-Abdeh, center, a member of the Syrian National Coalition at the United Nations headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland, Wednesday, Feb 12, 2014.

(AP Photo/Anja Niedringhaus)

Storm with 106-mph gusts hits flooded Britain

Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Britain's weather service says it sees the tentacles of climate change in a spate of storms and floods battering the country, but has stopped short of saying that global warming directly caused the extreme conditions.

The latest round of bad weather slammed into Britain's west coast on Wednesday with torren-

tial rain and winds gusting up to 106 mph (170 kph). Trucks were toppled, trees were felled and a major chunk of the railway was closed.

The website of rail operator Virgin Trains greeted visitors with the words: “Do Not Travel.”

England, which has been lashed by wind and rain since December, had its wettest January since re-

cords began in 1766.

The resulting floods have drenched the southwestern coast of England, the low-lying Somerset Levels and the Thames Valley west of London, where hundreds of properties have been swamped after the Thames burst its banks.

Britain's Met Office, the nation's weather agency, said in a paper published this week that “there is no de-

finite answer” on the role played by climate change in the recent weather and floods. But it said there is “an increasing body of evidence that extreme daily rainfall rates are becoming more intense,” probably due to a warming world.

Met Office chief scientist Julia Slingo told the BBC that “all the evidence suggests there is a link to climate change.” □

Italy's premier struggles to save his job

FRANCES D'EMILIO

Associated Press

ROME (AP) — Italian Premier Enrico Letta made a last-ditch pitch to hold on to power Wednesday amid a crescendo of calls from critics, including rivals in his own party, for a new leader who would pump life into Italy's economy. "Whoever wants to take my place must tell me what they want to do" when in office, Letta told a news conference. "I am proud of what we have done in these 10 months." Letta noted that growth was negative when he took office and now it has just started to turn positive. He said public debt has

gone down for the first time in six years, in part thanks to his government's efforts to privatize much of the sprawling state economy. Hours earlier, he huddled with Matteo Renzi, the Florence mayor and head of his Democratic Party who has made no secret that he covets Letta's job. Renzi insists, however, he wants to come to power through an election, not backroom maneuvers. Renzi will hold a top-level party meeting on Thursday that will be crucial to deciding whether Letta keeps his job. Without naming anyone, Letta challenged those who want him to get step aside.

"You don't step down because of hearsay, because of power plays," he said. Milan's stock exchange was up Wednesday, but any prolonged political turmoil could upset the markets. If Letta's party yanks its support, Renzi could be tapped to try to form a new government. But any new coalition would need to win a vote of confidence in parliament. Should Letta hold on to power, a significant Cabinet reshuffling is expected. "I have lived every day like it's my last because there were so many who have been trying to kick me out," Letta said. □



Italian Premier Enrico Letta attends a press conference at Chigi Palace government office in Rome, Wednesday, Feb. 12, 2014. Letta announced he would lay out his strategy at an early evening news conference aimed at shoring up backing for his leadership of a country impatient with slow progress in ending a stubborn recession. It is seen as a do-or-die moment to convince skeptical coalition partners and some members of his own party that he deserves to stay after only nine months at the helm. (AP Photo/Riccardo De Luca)

Bricks thrown at rally in South Africa

C. TORCHIA

Associated Press

JOHANNESBURG (AP) — Bricks flew as South Africa's opposition party held a protest march in downtown Johannesburg Wednesday ahead of general elections on May 7. South Africa's ruling party, the African National Congress, or ANC, is a master of political demonstrations, a legacy of its role as the main protest movement against white minority rule two decades ago. On Wednesday, the opposition Democratic Alliance party challenged the

ANC's prowess by staging a demonstration. It was an edgy affair, marred by brick-throwing by ruling party members who objected to the opposition's plan to march near their headquarters. Hanging over the episode was the specter of a 1994 incident, ahead of South Africa's first all-race vote, in which guards at the party headquarters — then based in a different building — fired on marchers from a rival political group, killing eight. This time, there were a few scenes reminiscent of the

unrest that defined South Africa for so many years under apartheid. Police tossed stun grenades and fired rubber bullets to disperse ANC supporters who tried to disrupt the march by several thousand members of the Democratic Alliance. Someone lobbed a gasoline bomb. One man running next to a ruling party supporter was seen with a pistol. But fears of greater violence were not realized, a hopeful sign in a nation that has enjoyed relatively peaceful elections since 1994 despite high crime and other problems. □



Parliament Member Moti Yogev interrupts the speech of President of the European Parliament Martin Schultz at the Knesset, Israel's parliament, in Jerusalem, on February 12, 2014. (AP Photo/David Vaaknin)

Israeli lawmakers storm out on European official

JOSEF FEDERMAN

Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — In a protest tinged with references to the Holocaust, lawmakers from a nationalist Israeli political party stormed out of parliament on Wednesday to object to comments by the visiting German president of the European Parliament. The incident marred what had largely been a conciliatory speech by Martin Schulz and added new fuel to recurring tensions between Israel and the European Union over Israeli settlement policies in the West Bank. Schulz began his speech by condemning Nazi Germany's "barbaric murder" of six million Jews during the Holocaust. He even thanked the chamber for allowing him to speak in German. But as Schulz moved from niceties into policy issues, Israeli hardliners began to object. Schulz enraged the lawmakers when he asked whether claims he had heard from a young Palestinian about Israel's control over water resources were true. "One of the questions these young people asked me which I found move moving — although I could not check the exact figures — was this: How can it be that an Israeli is allowed to use 70 liters of water per day, but a Palestinian only 17?" He later criticized Israeli settlement construction in war-won lands claimed by the Palestinians and questioned Israel's blockade of the Hamas-controlled Gaza Strip, saying it was strengthening extremists.

Members of Jewish Home, a nationalist party aligned with the settler movement, heckled him, accusing him of spreading lies and anti-Israel propaganda before storming out. The protests included veiled references to the Holocaust and his German heritage. Party leader Naftali Bennett demanded an apology. "I will not accept untruthful patronizing of the people of Israel in our parliament, certainly not in German." Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was more diplomatic, but also accused Schulz of "selective hearing" by repeating an erroneous Palestinian claim. According to Friends of the Earth Middle East, an environmental advocacy group, the numbers cited by Schulz indeed were wrong. But the trend he cited — that Israeli water consumption is more than triple that of the Palestinians — is true. Mira Edelstein, a spokeswoman for the group, said Israeli domestic per capita consumption is about 250 liters of water a day, compared to about 70 liters a day per Palestinian. She said the water-sharing arrangements were set in interim peace accords 20 years ago and were never updated. □

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Salvadoran castaway healthy but mentally fragile

MARCOS ALEMAN

Associated Press

SAN SALVADOR, El Salvador (AP)—A fisherman who

says he drifted at sea for more than a year, surviving on raw fish, turtles and bird blood, is in stunningly good health but psychologically fragile, medical experts said Wednesday as he recuperated in a hospital in his native El Salvador.

Jose Salvador Alvarenga told doctors he came close to giving up hope of being rescued after several large ships came near his small fishing boat but none tried to rescue him, even though sailors on at least one even waved at him.

"They passed close by, he asked them for help and they didn't want to provide it," said El Salvador's minister of public health, Maria Isabel Rodriguez. "There was one that almost destroyed his little boat because it came so close, but nobody helped him."

Although he was close to despair, "his desire to live was greater, he thought of his family and said that he wanted to live," Rodriguez said.

All of the doctors who have seen Alvarenga expressed concern about his mental state, saying he appeared shaken and he asked to be given as much privacy as possible amid an international media furor over his apparent ordeal.

"I want to be alone with my family. They should give me time to talk after I have recovered, because right now I'm in no shape to explain anything," Alvarenga said from his hospital bed in a video shown to the press by the ministry of public health. "That's what I'm asking them, that they leave me in peace, so I can recover, that they

don't bother my family, so I can be well. Nothing more than that." Alvarenga underwent a battery of tests after returning home from the Marshall Islands, where he showed up after what he has described as 6,500-mile (10,500-kilometer) journey from Mexico across the Pacific that began when his small fishing boat was thrown off course by bad weather.

The medical team that examined him at the San Rafael hospital in the Salvadoran capital said he was in remarkably good physical health, with no skin lesions from overexposure to the sun and no cardiovascular or kidney issues. His only physical problem, doctors said, was a case of anemia. "All of the exams have been basically close to normal. It's incredible," Rodriguez said.

She and other Salvadoran

experts who looked at Alvarenga's results said they had no doubt about the veracity of his tale, which left many skeptical even in the absence of an al-

ternate explanation for his sudden appearance on the Marshall Islands' Ebon atoll.

"He challenges ideas about human physiology

that we've had for a long time, but miracles exist and I don't think there's any reason to doubt him," hospital director Yeerles Ramirez told reporters. □



Jose Salvador Alvarenga, who lies on a stretcher in an ambulance is interviewed by reporters at the hospital in Santa Tecla, El Salvador. The 37-year-old, who says he survived more than a year on a small boat drifting from Mexico across the Pacific Ocean to the Marshall Islands, arrived in his native El Salvador early Wednesday morning.

(AP Photo/La Prensa Grafica)

Panama Canal chief reports progress in dispute

JUAN ZAMORANO

Associated Press

PANAMA CITY (AP)—

Panama Canal Administrator Jorge Quijano said Wednesday the agency has reached tentative agreement with contractors on some of the issues that have stalled work on the biggest expansion of the waterway in a century. But Quijano also told a meeting of Panama's Chamber of Commerce and Industry that the Panama Canal Authority might take over the project if no final agreement is reached this week.

The canal chief said he spoke by telephone Tuesday with executives from Grupos Unidos por el Canal, the consortium led by Spain's Sacyr SA and Italy's

Salini Impreglio SpA. It has been seeking to have the canal authority pay for \$1.6 billion in cost overruns on what had been planned as a \$3.1 billion chunk of the canal project.

"We had agreements in principle on several of the topics," he said, without giving details. "We still have some topics to resolve and we are working in that direction."

"That is not to say that we have abandoned the other alternative, which is that we take over the work ourselves," said Quijano. "We are preparing more each day in case that is necessary."

Sacyr declined Wednesday to comment on the report of agreements in principle.

Quijano said that one question to be resolved is if insurer Zurich American, which holds a guarantee bond of at least \$450 million, will play a role in financing renewed work.

"Zurich has not yet expressed itself in a conclusive way. We know that they have the willingness to do so," he said.

After Quijano spoke, Sacyr's shares in Madrid's stock market rallied 4.7 percent on Wednesday to close at 4.03 euros per share.

Later Wednesday, Quijano told Panama's legislature that without Zurich's financial participation "a possible agreement could fall apart."

"We are searching for a solution that is good for the country," he said.

The dispute threatens to delay a project that has led ports and shipping companies around the globe to make costly new investments to take advantage of the ability to move larger ships through a waterway that already handles 5 to 6 percent of world commerce.

The canal authority and the construction consortium blame each other for the overruns.

They were negotiating how to pay for the unplanned extra costs when talks broke down.

Other foreign contractors and project managers have expressed an interest in completing the 30 percent of work that remains on the third canal lock, according to canal officials. □

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2 killed as Venezuelan protests turn violent

JORGE RUEDA
RICARDO NUNEZ
Associated Press

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP) — At least two people were killed Wednesday as the largest protests ever against Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro's year-old government turned violent.

Gunfire erupted in downtown Caracas when armed members of a pro-government vigilante group arrived on motorcycles and began firing at more than 100 anti-Maduro student protesters clashing with security forces.

As the crowd fled in panic, one demonstrator fell to the ground with a bullet wound in his head. Onlookers screamed "assassins" as they rushed the 24-year-old student, later identified by family members as Bazil D'Acosta, to a police vehicle. Also killed was the leader of a pro-government 23rd of January collective, as militant supporters of Venezuela's socialist administration call themselves. National Assembly President Diosdado Cabello said the "revolutionary" known by his nickname Juancho was "vilely assassinated by the fascists" but he didn't provide details. The unrest erupted after a day of peaceful demonstrations organized by students and hard-line mem-

bers of the opposition. Pro-government supporters countered with a march of their own to express support for Maduro, who has accused opponents of

means. "All of these problems — shortages, inflation, insecurity, the lack of opportunities — have a single culprit: the government," Leopoldo Lopez, a Har-

"If we don't do it now, then when? And if it's not us, who will?" he said.

The crowd then marched to the prosecutor's office to demand the release of



Student demonstrator Bazil D'Acosta who was shot in the head is carried away after clashes broke out between opposition protesters with security forces and pro-government supporters during a protest against the government in Caracas, Venezuela, Wednesday, Feb. 12, 2014.

(AP Photo/Alejandro Cegarra)

trying to violently oust him from power just two months after his party's candidates prevailed by a landslide in mayoral elections. While anti-government demonstrators vented frustration over issues ranging from rampant crime to mounting economic hardships, they were united in their resolve to force Maduro out of office by constitutional

ward University-trained former mayor, told a crowd of about 10,000 people gathered at Plaza Venezuela in Caracas.

Lopez, who leads a faction of the opposition that has challenged what it considers the meek leadership of two-time presidential candidate Henrique Capriles, called the protests "a moral and patriotic duty."

13 demonstrators who human rights groups say were illegally arrested during the past two weeks of increasingly violent protests.

A smaller group of mostly students lingered after most demonstrators went home, setting fire to trash and ripping apart concrete sidewalks and steel grating to throw at police and national guardsmen. □

Mexico reporter slaying draws ire of journalists

RODRIGO SANTIN
Associated Press

COATZACOALCOS, Mexico (AP) — A slain Mexican journalist was found along-

side the body of a union leader whose kidnapping he had investigated and that casts doubt on officials' claim the journalist was killed in a personal vendetta, angry colleagues said Wednesday.

Veracruz state authorities said Gregorio Jimenez's body was buried in the backyard of a house in the town of Las Choapas, along with union leader Ernesto Ruiz Guillen's body and the corpse of a taxi driver whose name wasn't released.

Jimenez, a police beat reporter for the daily newspapers Notisur and El Liberal, wrote at least two stories about the disappearance of Ruiz Guillen, who was kidnapped in January during an assembly of Mexico's Workers Confederation.

Jimenez is at least the 12th journalist slain or missing since 2010 in the Gulf coast state. At least five gunmen kidnapped Jimenez, 42, from his home in the city of Coatzacoalcos last week and drove him away in an SUV. Veracruz state spokeswoman Gina Dominguez said Wednesday that Jimenez was ordered killed by an acquaintance in a personal vendetta.

She said four men arrested for participating in the killings told investigators that Teresa Hernandez, who owns a cantina in Coatzacoalcos, paid them for kidnapping and killing Jimenez. □

USVI defends handling of New Jersey man's killing

KINGSTON, Jamaica (AP)

— Police in the U.S. Virgin Islands are defending their handling of an unsolved slaying of a New Jersey native who was fatally stabbed last month during an apparent burglary.

James Malfetti III was from Scotch Plains, New Jersey, but had been living in the U.S. territory for about a year. His body was found Jan. 18 in a rented guesthouse on St. John. Malfetti's parents have told New Jer-

sey Sen. Robert Menendez that police seem to have botched the investigation and have treated them with hostility. On Monday, the U.S. senator asked the FBI to assist, saying that "the family deserves a competent

investigation." Police Commissioner Rodney Querrard insisted Wednesday that police have "taken all necessary steps since the day the victim was found" to process evidence and follow leads. □



Aruba Marriott Celebrates Love with Special Dinner Menus!



Valentine's specials ready for romance at La Vista, Simply Fish and Ruth's Chris!



PALM BEACH - Aruba Marriott invites you to celebrate Valentine's Day at three of their famous restaurants with special dinner menus during February 14th to February 16th. If you feel like starting the day with a romantic breakfast, La Vista has the

perfect Breakfast for Lovers special with unlimited strawberry mimosas for only \$24.95 per person. At night, La Vista offers a Valentine's Dinner for Two consisting of a special Italian buffet and a bottle of house wine for only \$85.00 per couple. To make your



night even more special, live entertainment will delight you with romantic background music while you wine and dine. The breakfast and dinner specials are available on Friday, February 14th. For reservations, contact La Vista Restaurant at 520-6601.

If you prefer a romantic night under the stars, Simply Fish offers a Valentine's Day 3-course dinner menu. You can choose from a caprese salad or jumbo prawn shrimps served with cocktail sauce for appetizer, fresh seabass with creamy champagne sauce or 6oz filet served with 4 jumbo shrimps for entrée and a delicious cheese cake topped with blue berry sauce for dessert.

This delicious menu is available for \$65 per person from Friday, February 14th to Sunday, February 16th. For reservations, contact Simply Fish Restaurant at 520- 6537.

To add some sizzle to your romance, Ruth's Chris Steak House has prepared a

scrumptious 3-course menu for only \$75.00 per person. The menu was carefully put together by the Chef and offers a selection of soup and salad, 8oz king crab legs, 14oz veal chop, 16oz bone in filet and a delicious symphony dessert. This menu is available for \$75 per person from Friday, February 14th to Sunday, February 16th. For reservations, contact Ruth's Chris Steak House at 520-6600.

On top of these delightful Valentine's Day specials, you can receive 20% discount at Simply Fish and Ruth's Chris on reservations starting at 9:00 pm. The Aruba Marriott staff wishes you a wonderful Valentine's Day celebration with your loved ones. □

Tango Argentine Restaurant gets glowing TripAdvisor review from Bonnie and Rob



PALM BEACH - Sometimes there is true chemistry between waiters and guests in a restaurant. That is exactly what happened to Bonnie and Rob Almaraz at Tango Argentine Restaurant, located in the Arawak Garden. The husband and wife are first-timers on the island and when they saw the Tango ad in the Aruba Today they decided to give it a try. They loved it so much that in one week they came back four times! Their fav dinner started off with a few

cocktails, proceeding with a Shrimp Salad followed by a T-bone steak for Rob. While Bonnie, who wanted to keep her gorgeous body in shape, choose a Tango Salad with the Insalata Caprese as main course. The entire Tango staff and especially Juan are very happy and grateful with the glowing review that Bonnie posted on TripAdvisor: "Located in major dining area next to all the hotels this is a MUST Dine at Place! Food is Wonderful and all

of the staff is absolutely amazing!! Make Sure You Ask for Juan as your server- his amazing hospitality kept us coming back to dine there! His attention to your needs and likes is spot on & he always recommended something I loved as well as created my own special drink! Tango is a warm and romantic environment with live music. Food is fabulous. Thank you, Juan for an amazing experience and your amazing hospitality while we were in Aruba!!!"



Building Real Sand Castles



PALM BEACH - Mr. Mark Mangin, a carpenter by profession and a repeat visitor to Aruba, staying at the Marriott, is enjoying his hobby on the beach. Luckily for us he choose to do this in his spare time, while on vacation and made it so young and old

can enjoy his amazing piece of sand art. Mr. Mangin created a cathedral, with his two bare hands in about five days of work. Thank you so much Mr. Mangin for sharing your artwork with us! Aruba appreciates it very much!

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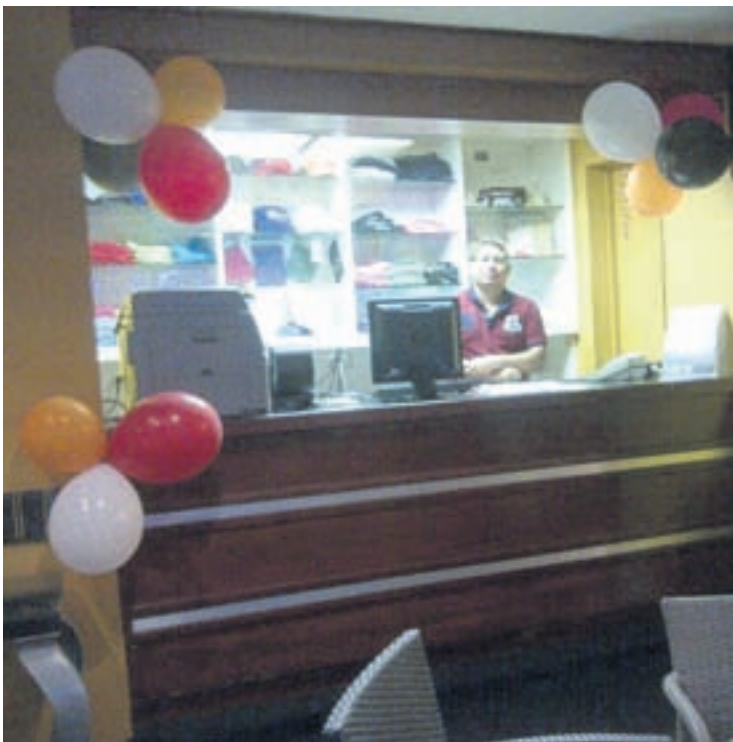
PALM BEACH - Tomorrow is one of the many days of the year that you can show your loved one how much you care. Tony Roma's is offering good food and service at a great price. For only \$21.50 per person you can enjoy a three course lunch or dinner which includes an appetizer of chicken and wild-mushroom on flatbread, a half slab of our famous

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ress for the sign-up form. Can't find us? Well don't worry we are located at the end of the hotel strip right in front of the Holiday Inn. Remember if you want good food and service please make sure you stop by Tony Roma's home of the world famous ribs. □

At The Holiday Inn: Excelsior Casino Reopens Hot Race & Sports Book!



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Yankees star Jeter to retire after 2014 season

BEN WALKE

AP Baseball Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Yankees shortstop Derek Jeter says he will retire after this season "with absolutely no regrets," ending one of the greatest careers in the history of baseball's most storied franchise.

The 39-year-old New York captain posted a long letter on his Facebook page Wednesday saying that 2014 will be his final year.

A 13-time All-Star who has led the Yankees to five World Series championships, Jeter was limited to 17 games last season while trying to recover from a broken left ankle sustained during the 2012 playoffs.

"I know it in my heart. The 2014 season will be my last year playing professional baseball," he wrote.

"I have gotten the very most out of my life playing baseball, and I have absolutely no regrets," he said.

Jeter was the last link to the powerful Yankees teams that won three straight World Series crowns from 1998-2000. Longtime teammates Mariano Rivera and Andy Pettitte retired after last year.

"Derek Jeter is Mr. Yankee of his era," Yankees co-chairman Hank Steinbrenner told The Associated Press. "He was the face of one of the greatest teams ever."

But Jeter's joyride hit a big speed bump recently.

"Last year was a tough one for me. As I suffered through a bunch of injuries, I realized that some of the things that always came



In this Oct. 6, 2010 file photo, New York Yankees shortstop Derek Jeter reacts after throwing out Minnesota Twins' Denard Span to end the eighth inning of Game 1 of baseball's American League Division Series in Minneapolis.

Associated Press

easily to me and were always fun had started to become a struggle," Jeter wrote. "The one thing I always said to myself was that when baseball started to feel more like a job, it would be time to move forward."

"So really it was months ago when I realized that this season would likely be my last. As I came to this conclusion and shared it with my friends and family, they all told me to hold off saying anything until I was absolutely 100 percent sure," he wrote.

"And the thing is, I could not be more sure," he wrote.

Jeter hit just .190 with one homer and seven RBIs last season. His agent, Casey Close, said Jeter wanted to declare his intentions before the Yankees start spring training later this week so that his future status wouldn't be a distraction. "I'm excited for him. It's kind of nice to see him go out on his own terms," Los Angeles Dodgers manager Don Mattingly said at spring camp in Glendale, Arizona.

Mattingly finished up his All-Star career with the Yankees in 1995, the same season Jeter made his big league debut.

"I saw him when he first showed for spring training. I always think about spring training when I think about him, just because he was this 17-year-old kid right out of high school who looked out of place.

Continued on Page 20



Canada beats U.S. 3-2 in Olympic women's hockey

Jocelyne Larocque (3) hugs goalkeeper Charline Labonte of Canada after their 3-2 victory over the United States during the 2014 Winter Olympics women's ice hockey tournament at Shayba Arena, Wednesday, Feb. 12, 2014, in Sochi, Russia.

Associated Press

Continued on Page 21

Davis looks ahead after surprising Olympic loss

BETH HARRIS

AP Sports Writer

SOCHI, Russia (AP) — Shani Davis went from sure thing to nothing in 2½ laps.

The two-time defending Olympic champion in the 1,000 meters got shut out of a medal on Wednesday, finishing eighth in a race he has dominated in recent years.

Now, the 31-year-old from Chicago has three days to clear his mind and make adjustments before he skates in the 1,500 on Saturday at Adler Arena.

Davis was one of the U.S. speedskating team's best hopes for a gold medal. The Americans have yet to make the podium through the first five days of competition.

"It's unfortunate for us," he said. "Now we move forward and try to figure out what we can possibly do to fix it."

Davis has never won the 1,500 at the Olympics,

earning silver medals in 2006 and 2010. But it's his other strong event, one of his "babies" as he calls the two sprint races.

Davis planned to study video of the loss to "see what these guys were doing that I wasn't doing."

"I just got to try to piece it together and figure it out for myself so I can possibly fix it for the 1,500," he said.

In the 1,000, Davis had a slower opening than gold medalist Stefan Groothuis of the Netherlands, and then lost 0.35 in the first full lap. He slowed in the final lap and finished in 1 minute, 9.12 seconds. Racing against Davis, Dutchman Koen Verweij overtook the American at the finish line in the next-to-last pairing.

"Watching it was agonizing," said Canadian Gilmore Junio, who gave up his spot in the race to teammate Denny Morrison, who took the silver.

Groothuis won in 1:08.39,

more than seven-tenths of a second ahead of Davis. Michel Mulder of the Netherlands earned the bronze to go with his gold from the 500.

"I think a lot of people were shocked with how fast the times were," Brian Hansen said.

He and the other Americans fared worse than Davis.

Hansen of Glenview, Ill., finished ninth, Joey Mantia of Ocala, Fla., was 15th and Jonathan Garcia of Houston was 28th.

"We have a lot of depth in this race," said Hansen, who became nauseous after his race. "We didn't show it out there, but we do."

Besides Davis, Hansen and Mantia, Jonathan Kuck of Champaign, Ill., will skate in the 1,500.

"I can't let it get me down because I have other races to skate," Davis said, "but I'm pretty sad about it." □



Shani Davis of the U.S. gestures in dejection after competing in the men's 1,000-meter speedskating race at the Adler Arena Skating Center during the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia, Wednesday, Feb. 12, 2014.

Associated Press



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CASINO AND SHOPS

Jeter

Continued from Page 18

He was skinny, but he was tough. He's been winning since the day he got there," Mattingly said.

Jeter is the Yankees' career hits leader with 3,316. He is a lifetime .312 hitter in 19 seasons, with 256 home runs and 1,261 RBIs.

Jeter has scored 1,876 runs and stolen 348 bases. He also is a five-time Gold Glove winner.

Added up, his numbers put him among the greats in Yankees history, with fans often invoking the names of Babe Ruth, Lou Gehrig, Joe DiMaggio, Mickey Mantle and others when mentioning Jeter's legacy. As for rating Jeter's place with the Yankees, Mattingly said: "It's hard. You're

talking about DiMaggio, Gehrig and Mantle. But he's right there. He's got to be one of those."

Plus, No. 2 is defined by so much more than his numbers. His backhanded flip in the playoffs, his diving catch into the stands, his speech to close old Yankee Stadium and his home run for career hit No. 3,000. As for rating Jeter's place with the Yankees, Mattingly said: "It's hard. You're talking about DiMaggio, Gehrig and Mantle. But he's right there. He's got to be one of those."

An October presence for so many years — he's a career .321 hitter in seven World Series — he also became Mr. November in 2001. His winning, 10th-inning homer came shortly after midnight in a Game 4 that began on Halloween. "Just as DiMaggio represented his era, Mantle represented his era and Ruth

represented his era. And Reggie represented the 70s teams," Steinbrenner said.

Jeter was the AL Rookie of the Year in 1996, the season the Yankees won their first World Series and re-established themselves as a major force. He was the MVP of the World Series. Jeter has said he's fully ready for spring training this year and set to play.

Jeter worked out at the Yankees' spring training complex on Wednesday and left around noon, giving no hint that he was about to announce his plans.

Commissioner Bud Selig said that during his tenure, "Major League Baseball has had no finer ambassador than Derek Jeter."

"Derek has represented all the best of the national pastime, on and off the



New York Yankees shortstop Derek Jeter swings at a pitch during practice at the Yankees' minor league facility Wednesday, Feb. 12, 2014, in Tampa, Fla. Jeter says he will retire after this season.

Associated Press

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field," Selig said in a statement. "He is one of the most accomplished and memorable players of his — or any — era."

"Derek is the kind of person that generations have emulated proudly, and he remains an exemplary face of our sport," he wrote.

A staple for so long in the Yankees' lineup, Jeter missed the first 91 games last year after setbacks in spring training and the early months of the season.

Even after his 2013 debut, things didn't go well. Jeter felt pain in his right quadriceps when he returned July 11 and again went on the disabled list.

Jeter returned July 28 for three games, but strained his right calf. He played from Aug. 26 through Sept. 7, leaving for a pinch runner after hitting a single against Boston. Four days later, the Yankees said Jeter was done for the

year.

The Yankees will open the 2014 regular season on April 1 in Houston. Their home opener is April 7 against Baltimore.

Like Rivera last year, Jeter is sure to be saluted wherever he goes in this final season.

"Now it is time for the next chapter," he wrote. "There are many things I want to do in business and in philanthropic work, in addition to focusing more on my personal life and starting a family of my own. And I want the ability to move at my own pace, see the world and finally have a summer vacation."

"But before that, I want to soak in every moment of every day this year, so I can remember it for the rest of my life. And most importantly, I want to help the Yankees reach our goal of winning another championship," he said. □



Women's hockey

Continued from Page 18



Hayley Wickenheiser of Canada, right, celebrates with her teammates after her goal against the United States during the third period of the 2014 Winter Olympics women's ice hockey game at Shayba Arena, Wednesday, Feb. 12, 2014, in Sochi, Russia.

JIMMY GOLEN
AP Sports Writer

SOCHI, Russia (AP) — The puck trickled under Jesse Vetter's pads and over the goal line, and then the whistle blew. Or was it the other way around? The Canadian women's hockey team beat the United States 3-2 on Wednesday in a tense preview of the expected gold medal match, taking the lead on Hayley Wickenheiser's controversial third-period goal. Meghan Agosta scored in the second period to tie the game 1-1, and then Canada added the go-ahead goal 93 seconds later on a shot that U.S. goalie Jesse Vetter seemed to have stopped, drawing a whistle from referee Anna Eskola of Finland. But the puck slid through Vetter's pads and over the goal line. A video — and presumably audio — review confirmed the puck went into the net before the whistle. "You celebrate when you see the puck cross the line," said Wickenheiser, who is participating in her fifth Winter Games. "It doesn't matter how."

But Vetter said she thought the whistle had blown before the puck came loose. American coach Katey Stone was even more sure of it. "I did hear a whistle blow before the puck went in," she said. "But, more importantly, I said to our players, 'Regardless of what happens, let's be ready.'" They weren't. The Americans allowed Meghan Agosta to break into the zone by herself and beat Vetter with just over five minutes remaining — the second goal of the game for the MVP of the 2010 Olympics — giving Canada a 3-1 lead. The U.S. pulled the goalie and cut the deficit to one on Anne Schleper's goal with 65 seconds left, but even with a power play that gave them a 6-on-4 advantage they couldn't tie it. It was the Canadians' third consecutive Olympic victory over the U.S., including the gold medal games in Vancouver and Salt Lake. But it was their first victory over the Americans for coach Kevin Dineen, who took over the team in December after a career in which he played

for Hartford and Columbus and saw rivalries like the Red Sox and Yankees and Michigan-Ohio State up close. "I think this one is the real deal," he said. "You always say, 'Oh, they don't like each other.' I don't think that. I think there's a mutual respect there. Sometimes to be really good, you have to have a foil." Finland's Jenni Hiirikoski scored her second goal of the game with 2:22 left in overtime to help the 2010 bronze medalists escape with a 4-3 victory over Switzerland earlier Wednesday. The Finns earned the No. 3 seed in the Olympic playoffs, and they will play the loser of the round-robin finale between Russia and Sweden, with the other facing Switzerland. "It's getting to be the fun part now," said Michelle Karvinen, who also scored twice for Finland. "I've been looking forward to getting to the real part of the tournament." Hilary Knight also scored and Vetter stopped 28 shots for the United States, which also had secured a spot in the semis already. Charline Labonte made 25 saves for Canada, which

had already earned a bye into the semifinals and now will take the No. 1 seed into the playoffs. If they both win, they would meet again in the final. "There's always plenty on the line" against the Americans, Wickenheiser said. "Whether there's a gold medal or not, it feels like a gold-medal game." It's the fifth time the teams have met in the Olympics, but the first since women's hockey was added to the Winter Games in 1998 that they have played in

the preliminary round. The Americans beat Canada twice that year — including the gold medal game — but it's been Canada ever since, at least in the Olympics. In addition to leading their southern neighbors 3-1 in Olympic gold medals, Canada has 10 world championships to five for the United States. (No other country has won even one.) The Americans have won five of the last seven, though, including last year's in Ottawa. □

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PG-13

KEVIN HART | REGINA HALL
about last night
MON - THURS 4:40 | 7:00 | 9:20
FRI 4:40 | 7:00 | 9:20 | 11:45
SAT 2:20 | 4:40 | 7:00 | 9:20 | 11:45
SUN & HOL. 2:20 | 4:40 | 7:00 | 9:20
R

GABRIELLA WILDE | ALEX PETTYFER
ENDLESS LOVE
MON - THURS 4:20 | 6:45 | 9:10
FRI 4:20 | 6:45 | 9:10 | 11:35
SAT 1:55 | 4:20 | 6:45 | 9:10 | 11:35
SUN & HOL. 1:55 | 4:20 | 6:45 | 9:10
PG-13

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SAT 2:05 | 3:00 | 4:15 | 5:15 | 6:25 | 7:30 | 8:40 | 9:45 | 10:55
SUN & HOL. 2:05 | 3:00 | 4:15 | 5:15 | 6:25 | 7:30 | 8:40
PG

GEORGE CLOONEY | MATT DAMON
THE MONUMENTS MEN
MON - THURS 4:10 | 6:45 | 9:20
FRI 4:10 | 6:45 | 9:20
SAT 4:10 | 6:45 | 9:20
SUN & HOL. 4:10 | 6:45 | 9:20
PG-13

AARON ECKHART | YVONNE STRAHOVSKI
I, FRANKENSTEIN
3D VERSION
WITH DUTCH SUBTITLES
MON - THURS 7:15 | 9:25
FRI 7:15 | 9:25 | 11:35
SAT 7:15 | 9:25 | 11:35
SUN & HOL. 7:15 | 9:25
PG-13

CHRIS PINE | KEVIN COSTNER
JACK RYAN: SHADOW RECRUIT
MON - THURS 4:40 | 7:05 | 9:30
FRI 4:40 | 7:05 | 9:30 | 11:55
SAT 2:15 | 4:40 | 7:05 | 9:30 | 11:55
SUN & HOL. 2:15 | 4:40 | 7:05 | 9:30
PG-13

WILL ARNETT | BRENDAN FRASER
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PG

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Noah has triple-double in Bulls' win over Hawks

The Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — Joakim Noah scored 19 points as part of a triple-double, and the Chicago Bulls beat the Atlanta Hawks 100-85 on Tuesday night.

Noah added 16 rebounds and 11 assists, and Taj Gibson had 24 points and 12 rebounds for the Bulls, who had six players score in double figures. Chicago won its fourth straight against the Hawks and sixth in a row at home versus Atlanta.

NBA Capsules

The Hawks have lost a season-high four straight overall.

Noah had his fourth career triple-double and first since Feb. 28, 2013.

Chicago (26-25) won for the third time in four games and pulled a half-game in front of Atlanta (25-25) in the Eastern Conference.

All-star forward Paul Millsap had 15 points for the Hawks but his streak of four games with at least 10 rebounds was snapped. Lou Williams added 13 points, and Jeff Teague had 12.

BOBCATS 114, MAVERICKS 89

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP) — Al Jefferson scored 30 points,



Chicago Bulls center Joakim Noah (13) drives the lane past Atlanta Hawks forward Mike Scott during the second half of an NBA basketball game Tuesday, Feb. 11, 2014, in Chicago. The Bulls won 100-85.

Associated Press

Anthony Tolliver added 22, and Charlotte earned a rare win over Dallas.

The Bobcats had lost 17 of 18 against the Mavericks, but they scored 60 points in the paint and tied a sea-

son-high with 12 3-pointers to snap Dallas' five-game winning streak.

Tolliver was 5 of 6 from 3-point range, and the Bobcats went 12 of 24 from beyond the arc.

Jefferson was 14 of 23 from the field and reached the 20-point plateau for the 14th time in 15 games.

Dallas' Dirk Nowitzki sprained his left ankle in the second quarter but he returned in the second half and finished with 16 points. Charlotte's victory came on the night it was announced that Bobcats owner Michael Jordan's wife gave birth to the couple's identical twin daughters.

Josh McRoberts had a career-high 13 assists and nine points for the Bobcats (23-29).

CAVALIERS 109, KINGS 99 CLEVELAND (AP) — Luol Deng scored 22 points, and Cleveland avenged a 44-point loss to Sacramento.

The Cavaliers, routed 124-80 in Sacramento on Jan. 12, took a double-figure lead early in the second quarter and were in control the remainder of the game. Cleveland has won three in a row for the second time this season.

Anthony Bennett, the No. 1 pick in the draft who has struggled most of the season, recorded career highs with 19 points and 10 re-

bounds. Dion Waiters added 20 points for Cleveland. DeMarcus Cousins scored 21 points to lead the Kings, who have lost 10 of 12 and seven straight on the road. The Cavaliers broke a three-game losing streak against the Kings.

Isaiah Thomas scored 16 points, and Rudy Gay added 14 for the Kings.

GRIZZLIES 92, WIZARDS 89 MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP) — Nick Calathes and Marc Gasol scored 18 points each, and Memphis overcame a career-best 37 points from Washington's Bradley Beal to win.

Beal was unable to convert down the stretch, though, including missing a 21-footer with 12.9 seconds left that would have tied the game.

Zach Randolph split two free throws with 11.5 seconds left to give the Grizzlies a 92-89 lead. John Wall's 3-pointer with about 1 second left rattled around before popping out.

Randolph, Courtney Lee and James Johnson scored 13 apiece for Memphis, and Randolph grabbed 10 rebounds. Calathes also had six assists for the Grizzlies. □



Li Na wins 1st match after Australian Open triumph

DOHA, Qatar (AP) — Top-seeded Li Na, playing her first match since winning the Australian Open last month, beat Magdalena Rybarikova of Slovakia 6-1, 5-7, 6-2 in the second round at the Qatar Open on Wednesday.

Third-seeded Petra Kvitova of the Czech Republic outlasted Venus Williams of the United States 6-2, 2-6, 7-6 (7) in a match lasting 2

hours, 32 minutes.

Li raced to a 5-0 lead in the opening set but couldn't keep her momentum going in the second when, at 5-5, Rybarikova won the next two games.

With a 3-2 lead in the decider, Li won the final three games of the match.

The 48th-ranked Williams wasted a match point in the third set tiebreaker.

"I put myself in a great position to win the match, which for me is the positive that I take out of this match," said Williams, who was leading the set 4-1 and had three break points on Kvitova's serve in the sixth game, but couldn't secure the 5-1 advantage.

Kvitova, playing her first

match since being upset in the Australian Open first round, refused to give in.

"I felt more confident on the court and was really fighting hard for every ball," Kvitova said.

Serving for the match at 5-4, Kvitova squandered one match point at 40-30, and then double-faulted away the game.

Also, second-seeded and three-time tournament semifinalist Agnieszka Radwanska of Poland defeated Sorana Cirstea of Romania 7-5, 6-0.

Angelique Kerber (6), Caroline Wozniacki (8), Ana Ivanovic (9) and Samantha Stosur (12) all lost their second round matches on Wednesday. □

Na Li of China returns the ball to Magdalena Rybarikova of Slovakia during the third day of the WTA Qatar Ladies Open in Doha, Qatar, Wednesday, Feb. 12, 2014.

Associated Press

UAE developing drones for citizen services

BY AYA BATRAWY

DALTON BENNETT

Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — The United Arab Emirates hopes to start using drones to fly government documents to citizens and is offering a \$1 million international prize for unmanned aircraft that can improve the quality of life in the oil-rich Gulf state, a government adviser said Wednesday.

The drone campaign is part of a wider push by the UAE to upgrade government services through technology, often pioneered in its glitzy commercial hub of Dubai.

"We want to reach to people before they reach us. We want to save time, to shorten distances, to increase effectiveness and to make services easier," Dubai's ruler Sheik Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum said in a statement.

The Gulf Arab nation has already introduced a wide range of smart-phone governmental services and there are plans to make Dubai a "smart-city" by incorporating government services through the use of smart phones and tablets. Power in the UAE is concentrated in the hands of ruling families. Unlike other countries in the region, it

has not experienced widespread demands for reform and appears to be counting on its vast wealth to deliver cutting-edge state services to keep its citizens content.

Noah Raford, who is an

drones as a possible delivery mechanism for government services," he said.

Raford said the UAE wants to see drones in the sky by early next year. He spoke on the sidelines of a government technology sum-

said.

A video released during summit shows an Emirati man receiving his national identity card from a drone that flies to his house after providing his location through a smart phone to

using drones, though the company acknowledged practical use is years away. There are obstacles to residential drone deliveries in the U.S. and commercial use of drones is still illegal according to guidelines by the Federal Aviation Administration.

Unmanned aircraft are already used for seeding and spraying of crops in Japan. In India, wildlife authorities have used drones for aerial surveillance of a sprawling natural game park to protect the one-horned rhinoceros from armed poachers.

The UAE could be one of the first governments in the world to implement drone delivery services to citizens. Policy-making is more centralized in the Emirates and the country's regulatory framework regarding privacy laws is not as codified as in many Western countries.

For the \$1 million competition, companies, universities and individuals around the world can compete to invent drones that improve quality of life. A second 1 million dirham competition, or roughly \$272,000, was launched for UAE nationals to come up with ways that drones can improve the quality of government services for citizens. □



Emirati consultant Abdulrahman Mansour Al Serkal presents a drone prototype as a part of an initiative by the Prime Minister's Office during the Dubai Government Summit in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, Wednesday, Feb. 12, 2014.

Associated Press

American adviser to Sheik Mohammed's office, told The Associated Press that the Emirates is already experimenting with drones and looking at prototypes to deliver documents, like national identification cards and driving licenses, to citizens.

"About a year ago we started experimenting with

mit in the UAE's city of Dubai.

"What we're really trying to do right now is just push the boundaries of what's possible and using that as a prototype, if you will, to explore the other policy implications that will have to be dealt with in a responsible and diligent way to make this a safe reality," Raford

a government employee. The drones would include fingerprint- and eye-recognition security systems to protect the drones and their cargo, the government says.

Online retailer Amazon.com grabbed headlines last year when its CEO Jeff Bezos said the company is testing package delivery

Nokia touts video recording in new Lumia phone

ANICK JESDANUN

AP Technology Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Nokia is selling a new Windows phone that promises enhanced video-recording capabilities.

The new Lumia Icon sports four microphones, compared with the one or two typically found in smartphones. The two on the front are activated when making phone calls, while the two on the rear are used when taking video — to better capture sound coming from the subjects.

The Icon takes video in 1080p high-definition resolution as well as still imag-

es of up to 19 megapixels. The resolution for still images isn't as sharp as the 38-megapixel maximum on Nokia's flagship Lumia 1020, but that allows the Icon camera to be flatter, without a protruding lens. Nokia is one of the main companies making phones based on Microsoft's Windows Phone 8 system. The system is growing in use, but it lags iPhones and Android devices in market share. Many apps come to iPhones and Android devices first.

Microsoft Corp. is trying to boost its Windows Phone system as sales

of traditional personal computers decline. Microsoft is buying Nokia's phone business and patent rights for \$7.3 billion in a deal expected to be completed by the end of March.

The Lumia Icon will be available starting Feb. 20 through Verizon Wireless for \$200 with a two-year service contract, or \$550 without.

The Icon is similar to Nokia Corp.'s Lumia 1520, except its screen measures just 5 inches (12.7 centimeters) diagonally, compared with 6 inches (15.24 centimeters) on the 1520. The 1520 is available only



This undated handout photo provided by Nokia shows the company's new Windows phone that promises enhanced video-recording capabilities.

Associated Press

through AT&T. The Icon supports wireless re-charging and works

with a variety of charging mats and other accessories sold separately. □

Stocks decline for the first time in five days

STEVE ROTHWELL
AP Markets Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Weak earnings from tobacco company Lorillard and household products maker Procter & Gamble helped end the stock market's longest winning streak of the year Wednesday. Lorillard dropped after the maker of Newport cigarettes said its profit fell as

the U.S. economy was. "At this point, boring is good," said Kate Warne, an investment strategist at Edward Jones, an investment adviser. "People are a bit tired of the ups and downs we've seen and a relatively flat day would be a sign of confidence," Warne said. The Standard & Poor's 500 index fell half a point,

lost \$2.48, or 5 percent, to \$47.47 after its earnings disappointed investors. Procter & Gamble, the world's largest household products maker, fell \$1.35, or 1.7 percent, to \$77.49 after the company said it would take a hit because of declines in emerging market currencies against the dollar. Currencies in developing countries such

said she would continue the central bank's market-friendly, low-interest rate policies.

The S&P 500 was down almost 6 percent for the year as of Feb. 3, but has since pared that loss to 1.5 percent thanks to gains in health care and technology stocks. Both sectors have jumped 4.5 percent in the past week.

For the market to advance from here, investors will want to see further evidence that the economy is improving said, Cameron Hinds, a regional chief investment officer for Wells Fargo Private Bank. While the economic reports have been weak, many economists believe that the unusually cold winter has been a factor.

"People are going to start looking for strength in the economy to get the market going," said Hinds.

TripAdvisor was among the day's winners. The online travel company gained \$6.07, or 7.2 percent, to \$90.27 after posting fourth-quarter results that led an RBC Capital Markets analyst to upgrade his rating on the stock. TripAdvisor said late Tuesday that its fourth-quarter revenue jumped and was stronger than analysts expected. Most of its revenue came from click-based advertising.

In government bond trading, the yield on the 10-year Treasury note climbed to 2.76 percent from 2.73 percent on Tuesday.

In commodities trading, oil rose 43 cents, or 0.4 percent, to \$100.37 a barrel. The price of gold rose \$5.20, or 0.4 percent, to \$1,295 an ounce. □



Traders monitor stock prices at the New York Stock Exchange, Wednesday, Feb. 12, 2014. Weak earnings from tobacco company Lorillard and household products maker Procter & Gamble helped end the stock market's longest winning streak of the year Wednesday.

(AP Photo/Mark Lennihan)

higher costs offset an increase in revenue from both traditional and electronic cigarettes. Procter & Gamble fell after the company lowered its sales and earnings forecasts.

The losses were relatively small. Before Wednesday's drop, stocks had gained for the previous four days, mitigating some of the market's weakness in January caused by signs of slowing growth in China and doubts about how strong

less than 0.1 percent, to close at 1,819.26. The Dow Jones industrial average fell 30.83 points, or 0.2 percent, to 15,963.94. The Nasdaq composite rose 10.24 points, or 0.2 percent, to 4,201.29.

Makers of consumer staples, a category that includes everyday products like soap, diapers and cigarettes, fell the most of the 10 sectors in the S&P 500. Lorillard had the biggest drop in the index. The stock

as Turkey, South Africa and Argentina have slumped against the dollar this year. Concerns about the outlook for emerging markets shook the stock market in January. Those losses continued as investors started to worry about the U.S. economy after some lackluster economics reports. Stocks have rebounded in the past week. They jumped on Tuesday after Janet Yellen, the new head of the Federal Reserve,

Bitcoin groups bullish despite tech trouble

FRANK JORDANS
Associated Press

BERLIN (AP) — A freeze on Bitcoin withdrawals imposed by three major exchanges won't cause any long-term harm to the digital currency's credibility, entrepreneurs attending a Bitcoin conference said Wednesday.

Bitcoin's value, which topped \$1,100 in November, dropped below \$630 Wednesday after the news overnight that the BTC-E and Bitstamp exchanges have stopped customers from converting their funds back into traditional currencies. They cited an apparent technical glitch that allows fraudsters to flood exchanges with fake withdrawal requests — a problem first reported by the Mt. Gox exchange when it announced a freeze on withdrawals last week.

"It is kind of like someone sending a receipt and then someone coming back to the store with a photocopy of that receipt and asking for a refund," said Nicolas Cary, chief executive of Blockchain.info, a site that provides users with digital wallets for Bitcoins.

"I'm confident they will get it resolved," he said. "Bitcoin is very resilient ... and it can handle this."

David Bailey, who sells physical coins based on the virtual currency, said he was "a bit unnerved" when two of his transactions simply disappeared earlier this week. They eventually returned.

"If I was fresh to Bitcoin, I would have been very scared," said Bailey.

Many of those attending the Inside Bitcoins conference in Berlin saw government regulation as the more pressing problem.

Recent crackdowns in China, Russia and elsewhere have prompted Bitcoin enthusiasts to form alliances to lobby decision makers and the public. Wednesday saw the launch in Berlin of the Global Bitcoin Alliance, an umbrella group for organizations that promote the cybocurrency. □

CBS 4Q earnings, revenue beat on TV show sales

NEW YORK (AP) — CBS Corp. reported fourth-quarter earnings and revenue growth that beat Wall Street expectations as advertising revenue was flat but content licensing grew thanks to the sale of shows such as "Hawaii Five-O" for domestic reruns. It also announced it would quadruple the pace of its share buybacks in the current

quarter as it spends cash raised from the pending spin-off of its outdoor billboard business.

Investors cheered the news, sending shares up \$2.62, or 4.2 percent, to \$64.47 in after-hours trading. Earlier, shares had closed up 95 cents at \$61.85. Net income in the three months through Dec. 31 rose to \$470 million, or

76 cents per share, from \$393 million, or 60 cents per share, a year earlier.

Excluding restructuring charges, adjusted earnings came to 78 cents per share, beating the 76 cents expected by analysts polled by FactSet.

Revenue grew 6 percent to \$3.91 billion from \$3.7 billion a year earlier, and topped the \$3.82 billion analysts ex-

pected.

CBS said it plans to finish the spinoff of its outdoor billboard business by the end of March. The company also said it has raised \$1.6 billion in new debt. Most of the funds will go toward buying back shares worth about \$2 billion in the quarter through March, up from a planned buyback pace of about \$500 million. □

Deere sees farm slowdown; projects sales decline

JOSHUA FREED

AP Business Writer

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) —

Deere & Co. said its first-quarter net income rose almost 5 percent, but it projected a slowdown in sales of farm equipment this year.

High crop prices in recent years have put money into farmers' pockets and driven a boom in demand for Deere's tractors and other motorized farm gear.

But Deere said Wednesday

that demand for farm equipment is "moderating," and it expects sales of its agriculture and turf gear to fall 6 percent this year as farm incomes decline compared to last year. It's expecting the slowdown to be especially pronounced for sales of larger equipment.

Overall, Deere said sales of farm and construction equipment will fall 3 per-

cent this year, and will fall 6 percent in the second quarter. Its profit guidance for the year was unchanged at about \$3.3 billion.

It said sales of construction and forestry gear will rise about 10 percent this year as the economy recovers and more houses are built in the U.S.

"Even in the face of moderating demand for agricultural equipment, Deere is well-positioned to deliver solid performance," Chairman and CEO Samuel R. Allen said in a prepared statement.

Shares of the Moline, Illinois-based company fell 60 cents to \$86.86 in morning trading.

For the quarter that ended Jan. 31, Deere earned \$681.1 million, or \$1.81 per share, up from \$649.7 million, or \$1.65 per share, a year earlier.



Derek Long uses a John Deere tractor to disk and cultivate a field in preparation for planting corn in Loami, Ill. Deere & Co. reported quarterly earnings on Wednesday, Feb. 12, 2014.

(AP Photo/Seth Perlman)

Revenue from equipment sales rose 2 percent to \$6.95 billion as it raised prices, especially on farm gear.

Analysts surveyed by FactSet had been expecting a profit of \$1.52 per share on revenue of \$6.63 billion.

Jefferies analyst Stephen Volkmann wrote that the projected revenue

declines are in line with Deere's guidance.

The first quarter "was a strong quarter, but the beat and unchanged guidance will do little to calm fears of cyclical weakness ahead," he wrote.

Including its financial services arm, Deere revenue rose 3 percent to \$7.65 billion. □



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GOLD Season
OS \$10k OV \$9500
Oceanfront \$17k
3 BEDRM OV \$17,000

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Oreo maker Mondelez sees cookie troubles in China

NEW YORK (AP) — Mondelez reported a fourth-quarter profit Wednesday that fell short of Wall Street expectations as the Oreo maker struggled with cookie sales in China. The company, which also makes Cadbury, Chips Ahoy, Ritz and Trident gum, said its core revenue for the final three months of the year rose 2.5 percent, primarily as a result of higher volume. Although gum sales in China were strong in the quarter, weak cookie sales dragged down results by a percentage in the "mid-

teens." The company experienced similar problems in the previous quarter, and CEO Irene Rosenfeld had attributed the decline in part to China's cooling economy. At the time, Rosenfeld said Mondelez was working to address the issues through a variety of measures, such as finding the right package sizes and prices. Looking ahead, Mondelez expects its core revenue to grow about 4 percent for the year. It had previously forecast growth of 4 percent to 5 percent. The company expects ad-

justed earnings for 2014 to come in between \$1.73 to \$1.78, better than the \$1.71 Wall Street had expected. For the quarter, Mondelez International earned \$1.77 billion, or \$1 per share. That compares with \$569 million, or 32 cents per share, a year ago. But the latest quarter's results included a sizeable gain tied to the resolution of its arbitration with Starbucks over the breakup of its packaged coffee partnership. Not including such items, the company earned 42 cents per share. □



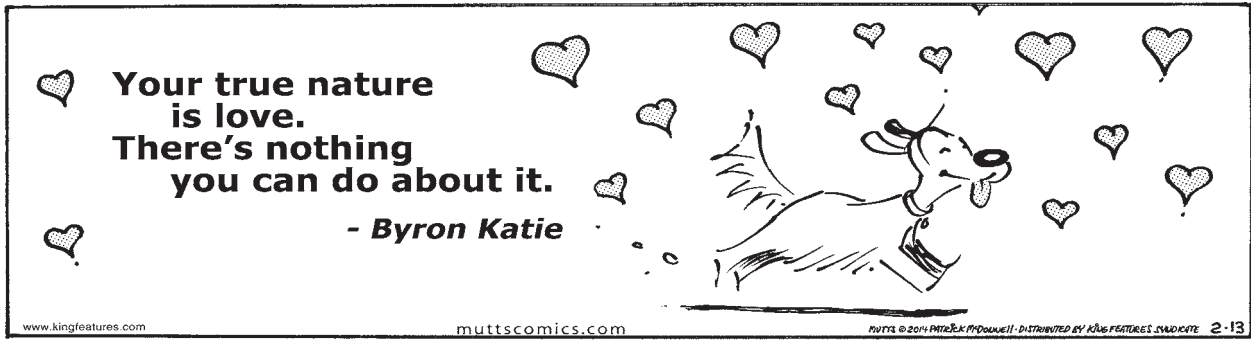
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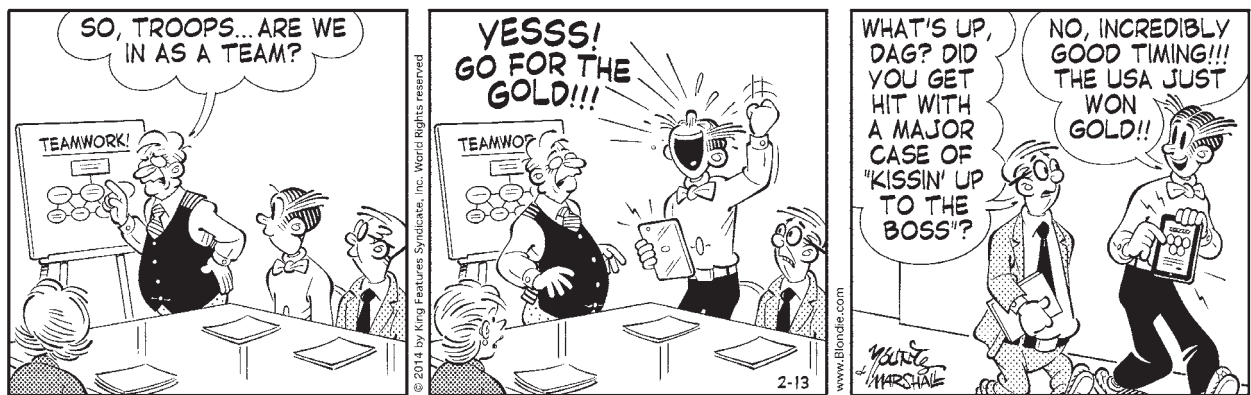
Mutts



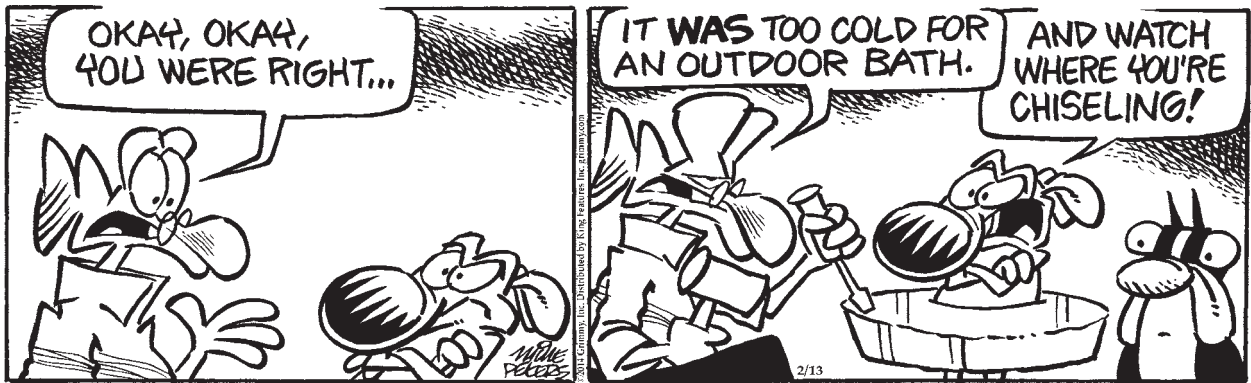
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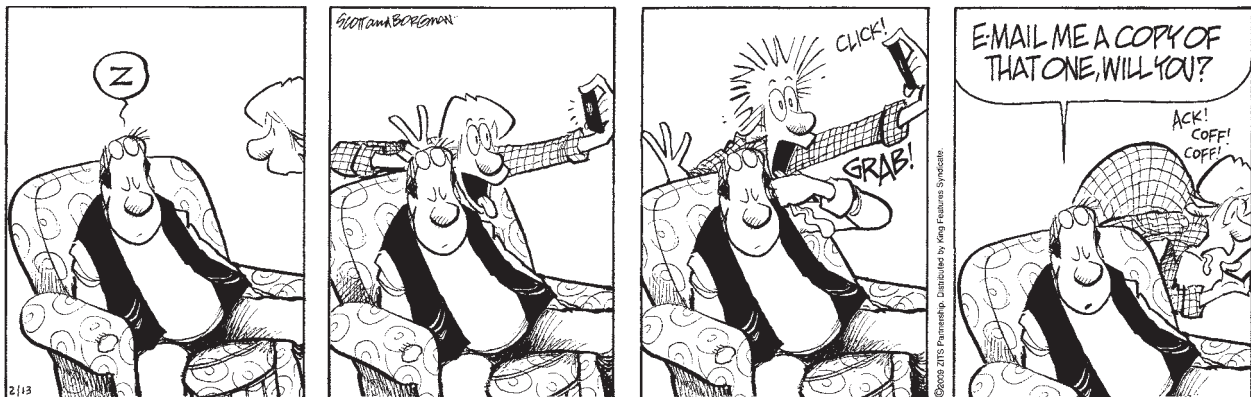
Mother Goose & Grimm



Baby Blues



Zits



Conceptis Sudoku

	1		7	5		6	3	
3					9			7
8								
	5							2
7				3				9
1							4	
								5
6			5					1
	4	2		7	6		9	

Difficulty Level ★★★ 2/13

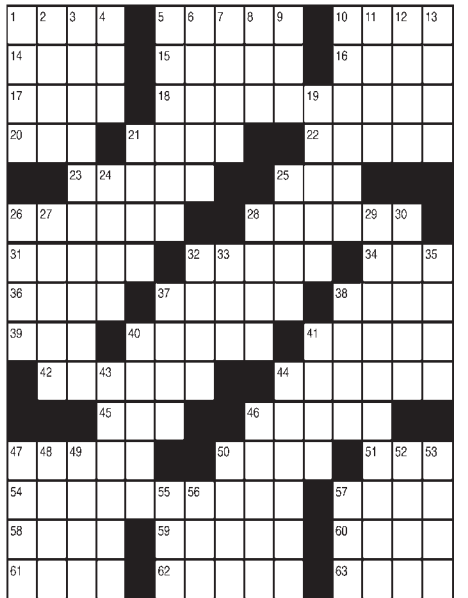
Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Yesterday's puzzle answer

3	2	4	6	7	5	1	9	8
6	1	8	4	3	9	5	7	2
7	5	9	8	2	1	4	3	6
4	9	1	3	8	6	2	5	7
8	6	3	2	5	7	9	4	1
2	7	5	1	9	4	6	8	3
5	4	6	7	1	8	3	2	9
1	3	7	9	4	2	8	6	5
9	8	2	5	6	3	7	1	4

ACROSS

- Recognized
- Met musical
- Common metal
- Scotia
- Daytime serials
- Source of woe
- Throw ___ hat in the ring; run for office
- Durability; continuity
- Stein or Stiller
- Upper limbs
- Encouraged
- Gives work to
- Emulate Jean-Claude Killy
- Meager
- Fabric whitener
- Trousers
- Gilbert & Rue
- Ad ___ committee
- Take apart
- Jeans fabric
- Location
- Unknown John
- Italy's most famous poet
- Yearned
- Actor ___ James Olmos
- Round shape
- Dined
- "Be quiet!"
- Wilkes ___, Pa.
- Caribbean and Adriatic
- Type; variety
- Crescent-shaped buttery flaky pastries
- Sad
- Numskull
- Hard stone used in jewelry
- Actress Sheedy
- Water jug
- Plastic building pieces for kids
- Holbrook and Linden
- Door handle
- Zero
- Fair; impartial



Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews 2/13/14

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved

ACHED	GRAB	ACTS
DRONE	LACE	SLEW
DANTE	ANEW	CANE
SWEETING	AVERSE	
REDD	TRINKET	
ODESSA	TREAD	
OUR	THREE	LEAFY
PEGS	OILER	DIRE
STOOL	OLDER	DEN
CASTS	MISSSES	
ASSISTS	KITE	
SONATA	SITUATED	
SLAB	FAWN	ASIDE
EARL	FLAK	LODGE
TREE	SETS	SNEER

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- Give up land
- Show boldness
- Gentlemen
- Goes out with
- Name for 12 popes
- More cautious
- Runs after
- Brief argument
- A ___, F, G, H...
- In ___; lined up
- Lasso, for one
- Nylons mishap
- Soothe; calm
- Door openers
- Late Mr. Mineo
- Years lived
- "Phooey!"

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Classifieds

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Fusion energy experiment yields promising results

MALCOLM RITTER
AP Science Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — American scientists say they've taken a key step toward harnessing nuclear fusion as a new way to generate power, an idea that has been pursued for decades.

They are still a long way from that goal. The amount of energy they got out of their experimental apparatus was minuscule compared to what they put into it.

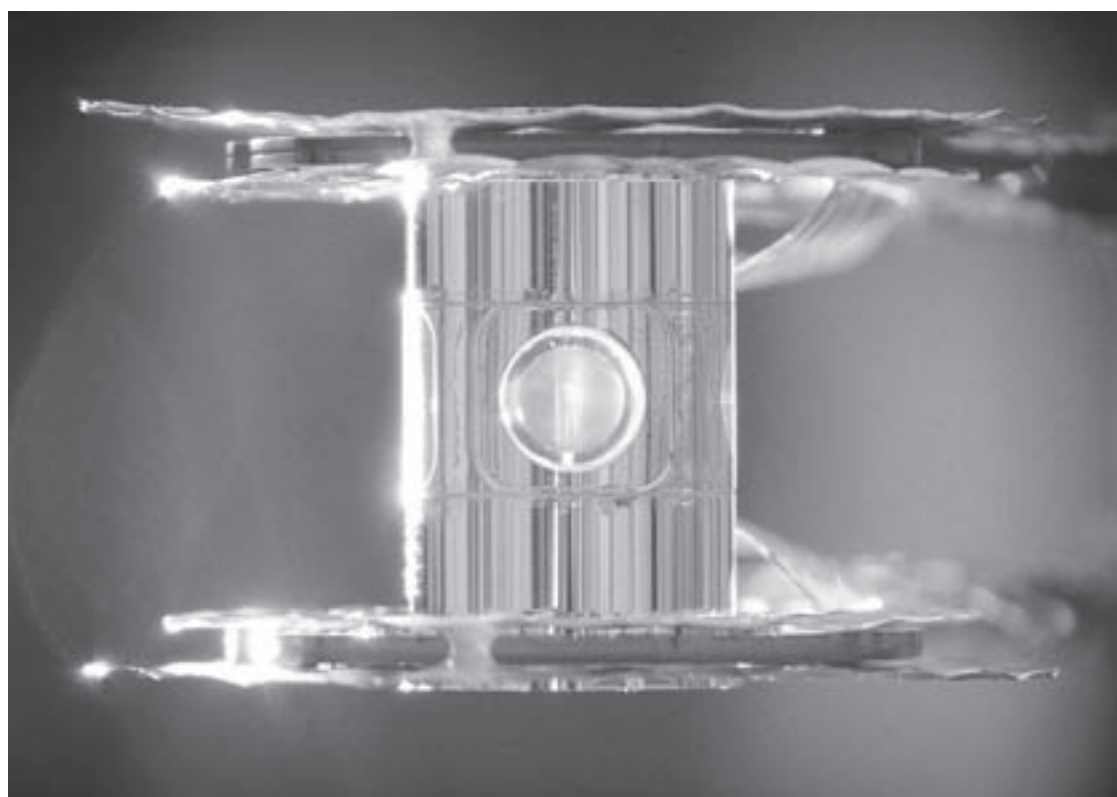
Still, the new work reached some significant milestones along the path to a cleaner and cheaper source of electricity, the researchers and experts said.

Fusion is the merging of hydrogen atoms, the process that powers the sun. That's different from nuclear fission, which is the breaking apart of atoms that lies at the heart of today's nuclear power plants.

Both processes release energy, but scientists have been pursuing fusion power because of several advantages. The supply of hydrogen for fuel is virtually unlimited, available from seawater, for example, in contrast to the uranium used in nuclear power plants. Fusion power would avoid the need for long-term storage of radioactive waste. And unlike fossil fuels like coal, it would not produce greenhouse gases that cause global warming.

In the new work, reported online Wednesday by the journal *Nature*, scientists from the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory near San Francisco, report results from two experiments done at the lab's National Ignition Facility.

In each trial, 192 laser beams briefly fired into a



This undated image provided by the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory shows a deuterium and tritium capsule, sphere in window at center, inside a cylindrical hohlraum container about 0.4 inches tall.

half-inch-long gold cylinder. The cylinder held a tiny ball that contained the fuel, which was a mix of two kinds of hydrogen, called deuterium and tritium. The energy from the lasers kicked off a process that compressed the ball by an amount akin to squeezing a basketball down to the size of a pea, said Debbie Callahan, an author of the paper.

That created the extremely high pressure and temperatures needed to get the hydrogen atoms to fuse. It was all over in the blink of an eye, with the reaction confined to a space smaller than the width of a human hair.

Nuclear fusion would be worthwhile only if it produces more energy than it uses, and the results were far from that. The hydrogen fuel did emit more energy than it absorbed from the lasers, an experimental

goal. But the fuel took in only about 1 percent of all the energy produced by the lasers. So the apparatus is still far short of producing more energy than it requires to operate.

Another key finding was

evidence that energy created by the fusion reaction was going back into the remaining fuel a "bootstrapping" process that is key to boosting the energy output.

"Seeing that kick in is quite

exciting, and it does show that there is promise" for increasing the energy output, said Omar Hurricane, lead author on the *Nature* paper. It's not clear when researchers will be able to get more energy out of the reaction than the lasers pour into it, he said, but "we are working like mad ... in that direction."

The sign of bootstrapping is "really a wonderful result," said fusion expert Robert McCrory of the University of Rochester, who was not involved in the research. "There's a lot more that needs to be done" to reach the point where the reaction produces more energy than the lasers deliver, but "this was absolutely necessary."

Scientists elsewhere are working on a different approach to fusion power, one that uses magnetic fields to contain superheated hydrogen fuel. Several nations are cooperating to build a huge experimental device to explore that approach in France. □

Associated Press

Brazil launches program to save the armadillo



In this Oct. 16, 2012 file photo, the armadillo mascot for the 2014 World Cup in Brazil poses for photographs outside the Brand Licensing Europe 2012 exposition at Olympia in London.

Associated Press

BRADLEY BROOKS
Associated Press

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP) — Brazil will begin a program meant to save the endangered three-banded armadillo, the mascot for this

year's World Cup, the Environment Ministry said Tuesday.

The move was applauded by environmentalists, who have complained that little has been done to save the

animal since it was named as the tournament's mascot. They are calling on FIFA to invest more in its conservation.

The three-banded armadillo is in danger of extinction, largely because of deforestation and hunting in its habitat in northeastern Brazil. Its meat is considered a delicacy by some in that region.

Those risks in large part are why the armadillo was chosen as World Cup mascot. Another is that when it's frightened, it rolls up into a ball small enough to fit into one hand, looking like a tan soccer ball.

Environmentalists working to save the creature complain that FIFA is investing little of the profits from merchandising the mascot into saving the animal. □

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Barbie to feature in this year's SI Swimsuit issue

MAE ANDERSON
AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — After 50 years of debate over her unattainably perfect figure, Barbie now is unapologetic about her tiny waist and endless legs.

To prove it? The doll, which is made by Mattel, is flaunting her frame in Sports Illustrated Swimsuit's 50th anniversary issue that's hitting stands on Tuesday. She'll be featured alongside supermodels like Christie Brinkley and Brooklyn Decker as part of a campaign called "unapologetic."

"As a legend herself, and under constant criticism about her body and how she looks, posing ... gives Barbie ... and her fellow legends an opportunity to own who they are," said Lisa McKnight, Mattel's senior vice president of marketing.

The campaign is a departure for the 55-year old doll, which has been both be-

loved as a plaything and criticized as an unrealistic standard of beauty for decades.

In fact, Barbie has faced scrutiny for everything from her chiseled facial features and disproportionately small waist to her "life choices." And last year, an artist renewed controversy over Barbie's effect on body image after an artist posted pictures of the more meaty physique the doll would have if she had the figure of an average 19-year-old.

Mattel has tried to change Barbie with the times. The doll has gone through several reinventions, including 150 careers, from architect to lifeguard, and a brief publicity-stunt breakup with her boyfriend Ken.

But this latest move, which again sparked online debate on Wednesday about body image issues, comes



This image provided by Sports Illustrated on Tuesday, Feb. 12, 2014, shows the cover of the magazine's 50th anniversary annual swimsuit issue.

Associated Press

as Mattel tries to revive interest in the doll icon. Barbie is worth an estimated \$1.3 billion in sales for the toymaker and she's the No. 1 toy brand.

But Barbie has lost some popularity in recent years to edgier toys like Mattel's Monster High dolls with their tattoos and neon hair. In fact, Barbie has had declining sales in five of the last six quarters, with sales falling 13 percent in the most recent quarter.

Mattel hopes the "unapologetic" campaign will boost Barbie's image.

As part of the campaign, there will be a collector Sports Illustrated Barbie doll, an event at the Sports Illustrated Swimsuit Beach House on Monday, a billboard in New York's Times Square and @Barbie tweets with the hashtag "unapologetic" on Twitter.

Barbie also will appear on the cover of 1,000 issues in an advertising "cover wrap" for the New York Toy Fair, which starts Sunday. Spending for the campaign was undisclosed.

"Unapologetic" is a word that Mattel executives use internally, said McKnight, the senior vice president at Mattel. But she said this is the first time the company is "engaging in a conversation publicly."

Sports Illustrated Swimsuit editor MJ Day said Barbie fits in with the swimsuit issues' "message of empowerment" for women.

But Allen Adamson, a branding expert, said he's not sure a feature in Sport's Illustrated's swimsuit issue is the right strategy for the brand.

"The Sports Illustrated swimsuit issue is one step away from Playboy magazine," he said. "It is potentially sending the wrong message to girls." □

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Hugh Jackman will host the Tony Awards again



This Sept. 7, 2013 photo shows Hugh Jackman, a cast member in the film "Prisoners," on day 3 of the 2013 Toronto International Film Festival in Toronto.

MARK KENNEDY
AP Drama Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Neil Patrick Harris has given way to Hugh Jackman at the Tony Awards. Producers of the annual telecast celebrating the best of Broadway said Tuesday that Jackman will once again take up

hosting duties for the next awards on June 8 at Radio City Music Hall. It will be Jackman's fourth time hosting the Tonys. He previously emceed the show from 2003-2005. Jackman, best known for being the hairy Wolverine in "The X-Men" franchise, was last on Broadway

with a one-man show in 2011 that routinely sold out the 1,176-seat Broadhurst Theatre and usually posted weekly grosses of \$1.5 million. It was his third time on the Great White Way, following "The Boy From Oz" in 2003 and the play "A Steady Rain" with Dan-

Associated Press

Andy Weir delivers with 'The Martian'

JEFF AYERS
Associated Press

In the near future, mankind has successfully landed manned missions on Mars without mishap. The Ares 3 team, the third to explore the surface, has equipment, shelter and supplies for a two-month stay on the Red Planet. But a major windstorm changes their circumstances in a hurry in Andy Weir's debut novel, "The Martian," a story for readers who enjoy thrillers, science fiction, non-fiction or flat-out adventure. The crew is forced to evacuate when dust begins to destroy their base camp.

Mark Watney's pressure suit is torn by a piece of shrapnel, and the other crew members, assuming the worst, take off, leaving Watney behind. After the wind dies down and the dust settles, he regains consciousness and discovers that he's been abandoned — and the only person remaining on the planet. After repairing both his suit and the shelter, Watney realizes he must figure out how to survive so that he can be rescued by the crew of the next mission, which is scheduled to arrive in a few years. Weir has created an au-



This book cover image released by Crown shows "The Martian," by Andy Weir. Associated Press

thentic portrayal of the future of space travel, and Watney is the perfect character to follow as he struggles in an unknown and hostile environment. □

iel Craig in 2009. He had hoped to be back in the musical "Houdini" but he pulled out of that project. Jackman's other stage credits include Australian productions of "Sunset Boulevard" and "Beauty and the Beast." In London he starred as Curly in Trevor Nunn's staging of Rodgers & Hammerstein's "Oklahoma!" He also was in the Oscar-nominated film "Les Miserables" directed by Tom Hooper. The official eligibility cut-

off date for the Tonys this year will be April 24, meaning all shows hoping to be considered for the awards must open by that date. Nominations will be announced April 29. Last year's telecast saw viewership jump to 7.24 million people, the show's largest audience in four years. Harris hosted for the fourth time but he'll be on Broadway this spring in "Hedwig and the Angry Inch." □



In this Jan. 19, 2014 file photo, Lady Gaga arrives to attend the Atelier Versace Spring-Summer 2014 Haute Couture fashion collection, presented in Paris.

Associated Press

Lady Gaga shoots music video at Hearst Castle

SAN SIMEON, California (AP) — Tourists are giving way to dancers as a production crew takes over Hearst Castle on the California coast, where Lady Gaga is shooting a big-budget music video. The San Luis Obispo Tribune says filming is taking place this week at the indoor blue-and-gold tiled Roman Pool and the outdoor Neptune Pool. The pop diva had yet to be seen as crewmembers carried in bags full of fake

flowers and a giant plaster seashell Tuesday. Shoots at the state historical site are extremely rare. Gaga is donating \$250,000 to the Hearst Castle foundation in addition to underwriting a \$25,000 water supply study and paying special fees. She will make a water conservation public service announcement and a short feature on the castle built by newspaper publisher William Randolph Hearst. □

Still Mad As Hell



MAUREEN DOWD

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WASHINGTON - I often wonder what Paddy would think. I wish I could have a pastrami on wry with the late writer and satirist at the Carnegie Deli and get an exhilarating blast of truth about "the atomic, subatomic and galactic structure of things today." What would Paddy Chayefsky make of Kim Kardashian? What would he think of Diane Sawyer showing cat videos on the ABC evening news? What would he say about Brian Williams broadcasting on the Huntley-Brinkley network a video of a pig saving a baby goat while admitting he had no idea if it was phony? (It was.) What would Paddy rant about the viral, often venomous world of the Internet, Twitter and cable news, where fake rage is all the rage all the time, bleeding over into a Congress that chooses antagonism over accomplishment, no over yes? What would he think of ominous corporate "synergy" run amok, where "news" seamlessly blends into promotion, where it's frighteningly easy for corporate commercial interests to dictate editorial content? What would Paddy say about the Murdochization of the news, where a network slants its perspective because it sells and sells big? What would he make of former Time Inc. Editor-in-Chief Norman Pearlstine returning in a new position as Time Inc.'s chief content officer, breaking the firewall between editorial and business as he works "with business and edit teams to drive the development of new content experiences and products throughout our portfolio that will fuel future revenue growth," as CEO Joe Ripp put it? What would Paddy think of American corporations skipping out on taxes by earning nearly half of their profits in tax-haven countries? What would he think of the unholy alliance between Internet giants like Google and Facebook and the U.S. national security apparatus? Chayefsky's dazzling satire "Network," with its unforgettable mad prophet of the airwaves, Howard Beale, blossomed from the writer's curdled feelings about TV. What wouldn't the network suits do for ratings, he would ask lunch companions like Mel Brooks and Bob Fosse at the Carnegie Deli. But now America runs on clicks. Chayefsky's nightmare has been multiplied many times over, with the total media-ization and monetization of everything, the su-

premacry of ratings and market share, the commercialization of all editorial decisions.

Now that they're armed with big data and science, corporate bosses are able to figure out how many people are watching which minute of which segment. An analytics service called Chartbeat gives webmasters instantaneous access to those on the other side of the screen by providing real-time data on their mouse clicks, time spent reading or watching and even their location.

In his fun upcoming book, "Mad as Hell: The Making of Network and the Fateful Vision of the Angriest Man in Movies," Dave Izkoff, a culture reporter at The Times, offers a vivid portrait of the charming and depressed curmudgeon.

Izkoff has great anecdotes about Faye Dunaway's prima donna paranoia about the most brilliant love-work sex scene in movie history. And he dishes up fun factoids, like how Howard Beale got his name from the mother-daughter duo, "Big Edie" and "Little Edie" Beale, and how Peter Finch flubbed and added an extra "as" to one of the most famous lines in movie history, which Chayefsky wrote this way: "I'm mad as hell and I'm not going to take it any more."

The Bronx-born writer, who died of cancer in 1981, was bedraggled and "built like an office safe," as the director Joshua Logan put it. He did exhaustive research into networks in New York but then had to film the movie at a Toronto TV station once the American networks realized the piece was a Strangelove dirge. Chayefsky said his 1976 masterpiece was "a rage against the dehumanization of people" addicted to "boredom-killing" devices - a dehumanization that has gone to warp speed as we have entered the cloud. He said it was about "how to protect ourselves" from "the illusion we sell as truth."

That illusion is ever more pervasive as people believe and spread wacky viral content like snow-covered Pyramids, a half-toilet in Sochi and a story about Samsung paying Apple a billion-dollar fine in nickels.

Chayefsky warned against "comicalizing the news," noting, "To make a gag out of the news is disreputable and extremely destructive." But real news became so diminished that young people turned to Jon Stewart and Stephen Colbert to learn about what was going on in the world.

Colbert told Izkoff that "Network" is his favorite movie. Although Howard Beale is not an inspiration for his bombastic TV alter ego, Colbert said that the Beale character anticipated an attitude those types of broadcasters share, which is "I will tell you what to think." Beale's approach, the comic said, was more "quasi-benevolent," as in "I'm going to remind you that you're being anesthetized right now." □



The Pain Of Leaving Work Behind



ROSS DOUTHAT

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In 1930, in the darkening valley of the Great Depression, John Maynard Keynes wrote an essay on "Economic Possibilities for Our Grandchildren," which foresaw a much happier future - one of growth, abundance and the steady decline of full-time work. Eventually, he suggested, civilization might settle on a 15-hour workweek, with three hours of daily labor being sufficient "to satisfy the old Adam in most of us."

Compared with its Depression-era baseline, much of Keynes' optimistic vision was prophetic. But the universal 15-hour workweek is not exactly with us yet. Instead, a different trend seems to be emerging, in which well-educated professionals - inspired by rising pay and status-obsessed competition - often work longer hours than they did a few decades ago, while poorer Americans, especially poorer men, are increasingly disconnected from the labor force entirely. (That this trend coincides with widening inequality is not coincidental.)

When economists look ahead to the possibilities awaiting our grandchildren, they often see this divide widening even further, as the digital economy delivers rich rewards to certain kinds of highly educated talent, while revolutions in robotics eliminate many of today's low-skilled, low-wage jobs.

This context is crucial to understanding the debate that erupted last week over Obamacare's impact on workforce participa-

tion.

The Congressional Budget Office had always predicted that the new health care law's mix of direct benefits and indirect incentives would encourage some people to cut their hours or leave their jobs outright. But its latest report revised the estimate substantially upward, predicting that by 2021, the equivalent of 2.3 million full-time workers - most of them low-wage - could disappear from the U.S. economy.

That big number prompted Republicans to recycle their predictions that the health care law would be a "job killer." As liberals retorted, this is not exactly right: These would be working hours freely given up, not jobs lost in huge Obamacare-induced layoffs.

Any health care reform worthy of the name would have some version of this effect: If you weaken the link between insurance and employment, workers will have one less reason to stay at a job they dislike. And it's easy to envision cases where the ability to reduce one's working hours would be an unmitigated good - for ailing near-retirees, for parents of young children.

At the same time, though, the design of Obamacare - Medicaid expansion, subsidies for comprehensive rather than catastrophic coverage, and then the way the subsidy disappears if you get a raise or take a higher-paying job - makes the work disincentive much more substantial than it would be under, say, a conservative alternative that offers everyone a flat credit to buy a catastrophic plan.

So the new law's impact on work will be felt well beyond families juggling jobs and child care. One of the studies used to model the consequences of Obamacare, for instance, found a strong work disincentive while looking at a population of childless, able-bodied, mostly working-class adults - a demographic that's already becoming more and more detached from steady, paying work.

And this is where liberalism has a very important choice to make. It's possible to defend Obamacare's overall goals while also recognizing its potentially perverse effects, and conceding that we should try to minimize the number of low-skilled workers exiting the labor market.

But it's also possible to argue that as a rich, post-scarcity society, we shouldn't really care that much about whether the poor choose to work. The important thing is just making sure they have a decent standard of living, full stop, and if they choose Keynesian leisure over a low-paying job, that's their business.

There are hints of a division within the liberal mind on this issue. Across the left and center-left, there's agreement that an unequal society requires a thicker social safety net and that as technological changes undercut low-wage work, government should help those left behind. But in the Obamacare debate and elsewhere, it's not always clear whether this larger welfare state is supposed to promote a link between work, security and mobility, or to substitute for work's gradual decline.

On the left, there's a growing tendency toward both pessimism and utopianism - with doubts about the compatibility of capitalism and democracy and skepticism about the possibility for true equality of opportunity, feeding a renewed interest in 1970s-era ideas like a universal basic income.

On the conservative side, things are somewhat clearer. There are libertarians who like the basic income idea, but only as a substitute for the existing welfare state, not as a new expansion. Both "rugged individualist" right-wingers and more communitarian conservatives tend to see work as essential to dignity, mobility and social equality, and see its decline as something to be fiercely resisted.

The question is whether tomorrow's liberals will be our allies in that fight. □

Wire Fox Terrier Wins Best In Show at Westminster

BEN WALKER

AP Sports Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The bloodhound drew the loudest cheers. The Portie came with presidential connections. A little wire fox terrier called Sky stood in their way.

The 5-year-old Sky won best in show at the Westminster Kennel Club on Tuesday night, finishing off a season in which she was ranked America's No. 1 dog.

Handler Gabriel Rangel scooped up Sky in one arm after she was picked as America's top dog. He kissed judge Betty Regina Leininger's hand as the title was awarded inside a nearly full Madison Square Garden.

Rangel may've learned that trick from his dog.

"Her personality is she loves to kiss people and she connects with everybody," Rangel said.

This was Sky's 129th best in show ribbon overall — she became a Triple Crown winner in dogdom, having previously taken the National Dog Show and the AKC Eukanuba event.

And it was the 14th time a wire fox terrier has won at Westminster. No other breed has won more than eight.

The winner with the ginger-and-white coat and terrier goatee beat out an impressive lineup in the final ring.

Joining Sky were a standard poodle, a Cardigan Welsh corgi and a miniature pinscher, along with the bloodhound, Portuguese water dog and Irish water spaniel.

"She has the 'it' factor. She owned this night," Leininger said.

The standard poodle named Ally was chosen as the runner-up.

Sky sat still backstage alongside the prized silver bowl after the biggest win in her career.

By the weekend, the pooch might be pooped. Sky was scheduled to tour the morning TV news shows Wednesday, eat a steak lunch at famed Manhattan restaurant Sardi's and also go up the Empire State



Sky, a wire fox terrier, at an after party following her Best in Show win at the Westminster Kennel Club's 138th Annual Dog Show in New York, Feb. 11, 2014. Sky became the 14th member of her breed to win Best in Show.

(Andrew White/The New York Times)

Building.

And on Thursday night, she's set for her Broadway debut with a walk-on part in the Tony Award-winning

musical "Kinky Boots."

Neat treats for a dog with the champion's name of Afterall Painting The Sky. A special time for all those

around her, too.

"It's like winning an Oscar," said Victor Malzoni Jr., one of the owners who is an economist from Brazil.

There were 2,845 dogs entered in the 138th Westminster Kennel Club show. They were eligible in 190 breeds and varieties. □



Terriers of many varieties and their handlers wait to enter the floor for best of group during the Westminster Kennel Club's 138th Annual Dog Show at Madison Square Garden in New York, Feb. 11, 2014.

(Andrew White/The New York Times)